

MEMOIR  
OF  
WILLIAM TYNDALE,  
WHO  
FIRST PRINTED THE NEW TESTAMENT IN ENGLISH, 1525;  
AND  
WAS MARTYRED AT VILVOORD, NEAR BRUSSELS,  
SEPTEMBER, 1536.



TYNDALE AT HIS WORK.



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## Memoir of William Tyndale: 1936

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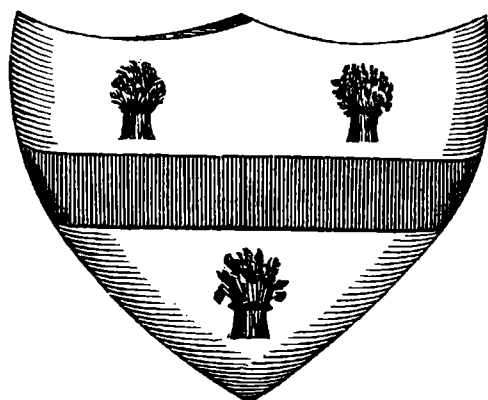
WAS MARTYRED AT VILVOORD, NEAR BRUSSELS,

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# ARMORIAL BEARINGS

## OF

# BARON DE TYNDALE.



PEDIGREE OF WILLIAM TYNDALE THE MARTYR AS PRESERVED BY ONE BRANCH  
OF THE FAMILY, COMMUNICATED BY J. ROBERTS, ESQ.

Hugh, Baron de Tyndale, of Langley Castle, Northumberland, escaped from the field of battle when the Yorkists were overcome by the Lancastrians; lost his title and estate; he took refuge in Gloucestershire, under the assumed name of Hutchins.

Alicia, daughter and sole heiress of Hunt, of Hunt's Court at Nibley, in Gloucestershire.

John Tyndale, otherwise called Hutchins, of Hunt's Court at Nibley, Gloucestershire.

John Tyndale, otherwise Hutchins, an eminent merchant of London, persecuted by Bishop Stokesly.

William Tyndale, otherwise Hutchins, strangled and burnt at Vilvoorde, near Brussels, September, 1536.

Thomas Tyndale, whose descendant, Lydia Tyndale, married the celebrated Quaker, honest John Roberts, of Lower Siddington, near Cirencester.





REFERT HÆC TABELLA QVOD SOLVM POTVIT ARS GVILHELMI TYNDAIL. HVIVS OLIM AVLÆ ALVMI, SIMVL ET ORNAMENTI QVI POST FÆLICES PVRIORIS THEOLOGÆ PRIMITIÆ HIC DEPOSITAS, ANTVEPLÆ IN NOVO TESTAMENTO, NEC NON PENTATEVCHO IN VERNACVLAM TRANSFERENDO OPERAM NAVAVIT, ANGLIS SVIS EO VSQ. SALVTIFERAM, VT INDE NOII IMMERITO ANGLIÆ APOSTOLVS AVDIRET MARTYRIO WILFORDÆ PROPE BRITELLAS CORONATVS A 1536. VRSIVEL ADVERSARIO (PROCVRATORI NEMPE IMPERITORIS GENERALI) CREDAMVS PERDOCTVS PIVS ET BONVS

Engraved by N. Whistock, for Samuel Bagster i. uernaster Row





MEMOIR  
OF  
WILLIAM TYNDALE,  
*The Martyr.*

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“ Though I am olde, clothed in barbarous wede  
Nothyng garnysshed with gaye eloquency,  
Yet I tell the trouth, yf ye lyst to take hede  
Agaynst theyr frowarde, furious frenesy  
Which reckon it for a great heresy,  
And vnto laye people greuous outrage,  
To haue goddes worde in their natyfe langage.”

TYNDALE'S COMPENDIOUS OLDE TREATISE.

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CHAPTER I.

ERA IN WHICH HE LIVED—DESCENT—BIRTH—EDUCATION—ORDINATION—TAKES THE VOWS AT GREENWICH—TRANSLATES PORTIONS OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

**T**HERE is no period of British history more deeply interesting than the reign of Henry the Eighth. Nor is there any historical event upon record, calculated to excite our feelings so intensely as the first publication of the Sacred Scriptures in the English language; which took place during that extraordinary era.

Portions of the holy oracles in manuscript, veiled with glosses, had been permitted by the Romish Church to be read in English; but this was under restrictions which nearly amounted to a prohibition, except to a favoured few of the nobility and clergy; so

that, instead of a free and honest circulation of divine truth, like the water of life, flowing to invigorate the virtues, and ameliorate the sorrows of the people, such selections, glossed and limited, produced a niggard stream, and that basely polluted.

The struggle to throw off the unholy domination of the Romish church over conscience, which commenced with the origin of papal usurpation, had, in later years, become strong and determined. The language of Milton, when alluding to this epoch, is peculiarly impressive: "When I recall to mind, at last, after so many dark ages, wherein the huge overshadowing train of error had almost swept all the stars out of the firmament of the church; how the bright and blissful Reformation, by divine power, struck through the black and settled night of ignorance and anti-christian tyranny; methinks a sovereign and reviving joy must needs rush into the bosom of him who reads or hears, and the sweet odour of the returning Gospel, imbathe his soul with the fragrancy of heaven. Then was the sacred Bible sought out of the dusty corners, where profane falsehood and neglect had thrown it; the schools opened; divine and human learning raked out of the embers of forgotten tongues; the princes and cities trooping apace to the new erected banner of salvation; the martyrs with the irresistible might of weakness, shaking the powers of darkness, and scorning the fiery rage of the old red dragon."\* The overbearing pride and pomp of the prelates, and the open debaucheries of the monks, hastened their downfall. So notorious was this, that when Tynedale pressed upon Sir Thomas More the wretched immorality of the Pope and clergy, while it excited his anger, the only reply he made was: "Our mater is not of the lyuyng but of the doctryne."† In addition to the influence of this profaneness upon public opinion, the seed sown by Richard of Hampole,‡

\* On the Reformation in England, B. I.

† Confutacyon of Tyndale, Vol. II. p. 364.

‡ I possess a beautiful English manuscript on vellum of Hampole's translation of the Epistles and Gospels, with a comment; and although it abounds with scholastic sophistries and "old wives' fables," it exhibits occasionally some bright rays of Gospel light.

and Wickliffe, in their attempts to circulate scriptural knowledge, was secretly producing a rich harvest, and the effects extended to every class of society.

In vain were promulgated canons, acts, and proclamations, to limit or stay the progress of inquiries after present happiness and that all important object, future felicity. Absurd and despotic laws to chain the mind and enslave the conscience, although accompanied with an awful train of terrors, tortures, and death, appeared to excite, instead of repressing, the spirit of free and serious inquiry.

Conscience, pressing upon the mind a solemn sense of personal obligation to answer for our faith and conduct, how feebly soever enlightened, can never be extinguished by human power. The burning of a martyr, known to have been a good and a godly man, excited among the spectators of those horrors, the inquiry, Can Christianity sanction such cruelties? while the avidity with which the translations of the New Testament were destroyed, led the populace to believe that the Church of Rome was opposed to the Gospel, and was endeavouring to conceal those sacred truths in a language known only to some of the prelates and monks. They were sufficiently enlightened to see that the influence of the moral and spiritual sun was obscured from them, instead of shining forth in its splendour, equally to guide and comfort man, whether the inhabitant of a palace, of a cloister, or of a cottage.

A general discontent prevailed in England against a pompous cardinal and a corrupt clergy, when Luther, supported by some of the German princes, boldly threw off his allegiance to the Pope; and, by the publication of the Bible in German, laid the basis of that immortal structure, the Protestant Reformation. The cause of truth spread with rapidity. In January, 1525, the aged Le Fevre printed the New Testament in French. And, about the same time, William Tyndale, a man whose memory will ever be dear to the British Christian, prepared to publish a translation of the Sacred Scriptures in his vernacular language, an object which had occupied his mind with intense anxiety for many years.

This apostolic man was descended of an ancient and honourable family, who for several centuries were settled on the banks of the Tyne, in Northumberland. His ancestors were the Barons de Tyndale, whose seat was Langley Castle, a small but strong fortress, the ruins of which have resisted the ravages of time: they are beautifully situated on a rising ground in Tyndale.\*

During those intestine commotions which desolated this country, the wars between the rival houses of York and Lancaster, Hugh Baron de Tyndale joined the weaker party, and escaping from the field of battle, fled for refuge into Gloucestershire, under the assumed name of Hytchins. Thus stripped of his honours, possessions, and even of his name: the distressed fugitive could not have conceived that these troubles would lead him to an alliance, the issue of which was destined to immortalize the name that he had concealed, and engrave it upon our memories as one of the most illustrious of all the noble names which have so richly adorned our nation. The concealed Baron married Alicia, daughter and sole heiress of — Hunt, Esq., of Hunt's Court, Nibley, Gloucestershire. This property descended to John Tyndale, *alias* Hytchins, his son and heir;† who had three sons; John who became a distinguished merchant in London, Thomas,‡ and William, the subject of this memoir. Several branches of the family were honoured with knighthood: Sir John Tyndale attended at the coronation of Queen Ann Boleyn, as a Knight of the Bath.

\* Thomas Tyndale, writing to his cousin, February 3, 1663, gives this account of his family:—"I have heretofore heard that the first of your familie came out of the north, in the times of the wars between the houses of York and Lancaster, at what time many of good sort (their side going down) did fly for refuge and succor where they could find it. That it was your predecessor his fortune to come into Gloucestershire, changing his name to that of Huchins, and that afterwards he married there, and so having children, he did before his death declare his right name, and from whence, and upon what subject he came thither, and so taking his own name, did leave it unto his children."—Rudder's Gloucestershire, p. 757.

† MSS. and Pedigree in possession of J. Roberts, Esq., Temple. See an extract placed before p. 1 of this Memoir.—Rudder's Gloucestershire, p. 757.

‡ One of his descendants, Lydia, married JOHN ROBERTS, of Siddington near Cirencester in 1646; a man of distinguished piety, and the head, in those parts, of the Quakers, who, with his son, suffered severe persecution for his conscientious adherence to those religious principles. An interesting memoir of this is published by the Society of Friends.

William Tyndale was born at Hunt's Court,\* about the year 1477. At a very early age, he became a diligent student in the University of Oxford, having been instructed from a child in grammar, logic, and philosophy;† he continued there until his proficiency in the Greek and Latin languages enabled him to read the New Testament to his fellow students in St. Mary Magdalen Hall, and to those of Magdalen College.‡

Oxford was, at this time, the most celebrated seat of learning in the world. Erasmus, who was a student in St. Mary's, thus writes to a friend in Italy :—" Here I have met with humanity, politeness, learning not trite and superficial, but deep, accurate, true old Greek and Latin learning, and withal so much of it, that, but for mere curiosity, I have no occasion to visit Italy : in Grocyn I admire an universal compass of learning ; Linacre's acuteness, depth, and accuracy are not to be exceeded." Here Tyndale took his degrees, upon which, by indefatigable study, he acquired and laid a solid foundation—that profound knowledge of the learned languages, which so highly distinguished and so eminently qualified him for his important biblical translation. The honour of preparing this singularly gifted man for his great work was not limited to Oxford. Dissatisfied with his attainments in literature, he entered as a student in the University of Cambridge, and became there " well ripened in God's word." His memory sheds an equal lustre on both those ancient seats of learning, in the latter of which, it is said, that he also took a degree. It was here he formed a friendship, uninterrupted until death, with John Frith, a student much younger than himself, but of extraordinary attainments and deep piety, a determined reformer, and in manners most amiable and unassuming. Both were alike eminent for an unspotted life and virtuous disposition. The ordination of William Tyndale took place at the conventual church of the priory of St. Bartholomew in Smithfield, on the eleventh day of March, 1502, by Thomas, suffragan Bishop of Pavaden, by authority of William Warham, Bishop of London, and was ordained priest to

\* Atkin's Gloucestershire, p. 304.

† Wood's " Athenæ Oxon."

‡ The painting from which the portrait is engraved, is preserved in Magdalen Hall.

the nunnery of Lambley, in the diocese of Carlisle. He took the vows, and became a friar in the monastery at Greenwich in 1508.

We are indebted to the Rev. R. H. Barham, of St. Paul's, for the discovery of a memorandum in Latin, peculiarly interesting in tracing the history of Tyndale. It is on the title-page of the "Sermones de Herolt," a small folio, printed in the year 1495, in the Cathedral Library: "Charitably pray for the soul of John Tyndale, who gave this book to the monastery of Greenwich of the observance of the minor brothers, on the day that brother William, his son, made his profession, in the year 1508."

This accounts for an observation in the preface to his "Parable of the Wicked Mammon, May, 1528:" "A year before came one Jerome *a brother of Greenwich also*, through Worms to Argentine, saying that he intended to get his living with his hands, and to live no longer idly, and of the sweat and labour of those captives which they had taught not to believe in Christ, but in cut shoes and russet coats."

For some years previous to his taking the vows, Tyndale had not only read the holy oracles to his fellow students, but had commenced that work which appears to have been throughout his life an object of the most anxious solicitude, by translating portions of the New Testament into English. The original autograph of these translations,\* now in my possession, is in quarto, the margins ornamented with borders, and every portion accompanied with an appropriate drawing in imitation of some ancient missal. In many places he has written his initials W. T., and on two of the ornamental pillars he has placed the date: on the capital of one is inscribed "TIME TRIETH, 1502;" and on another, simply the date, "1502." The version in this selection of Scriptures nearly agrees with his first printed edition. It is a striking proof of his early proficiency, his extraordinary knowledge of the Greek language, and his extreme care and indefatigable research, that many whole paragraphs agree exactly with the translation now in use. Notwithstanding his amiable temper, he had become even then an object of persecu-

\* This valuable MS. came into my hands from the library of that eminent antiquary, the Rev. H. White, of Lichfield Cathedral.



tion. He has interwoven this prayer in one of his drawings, cherubs holding the scroll on which it is written: "DEFEND ME, O LORD, FROM ALL THEM THAT HAIT ME. W. T."

The first of these sections is here copied literally, to show his singular proficiency as a translator, twenty-three years prior to his venturing to publish the New Testament. It is the latter part of the seventh chapter of Luke. "And one of the Pharises desired him that he wolde eate withe him. And he wente into the Pharises house; and sat downe to meate. And beholde a woman in that cytie (whiche was a sinner) as sone as she knewe that Jesus sat at meate in the Pharases house, she brought an alblaster boxe of oyntment, and stode at his fete behynde hym wepyng: and began to wasshe his fete withe teares, and dyd wipe them withe the heeres of her heade: an kissed his fete, and anoynted them withe the oyntment. When the Pharise whiche had bydden him, sawe, he spake within himselfe, saynge, yf this man were a prophet, he wolde surely knowe who, and what maner of woman this is that touched him; for she is a sinner. And Jesus answered, an saide vnto him: Simon, I haue somewhat to saye vnto the. And he saide. Master, say on. There was a certene lender, whiche had two debtors, the one oughte fyue hundreth pence, and the other fiftye. When they had nothyng to pay, he forgaue them bothe. Tell me therfore; whiche of them will loue him moste: Simon answered and sayde, I suppose that he to whom he forgaue moste: And he saide vnto him: Thou haiste truly iudged. And he turned to the woman, and sayde vnto Symon. Seest thou this woman: I entred in to thyne house, thou gauest me no water for my fete, but she hath wasshed my fete withe teares, and wyped them with the heares of her heade. Thou gauiste me no kysse: but she sence y<sup>e</sup> tyme I cam in, haith not ceaced to kysse my fete. Myne heade with oyle, thou diddest not anoynte: but she hathe anoynted my fete with oyntment: Wherefore I say vnto the: many synnes ar forgyuen her, for she loued much. To whom lesse is forgiuen, the same dothe less loue. And he said vnto her, thy synnes ar forgyuen the: And they that sat at meate with hym began to say with in them selues, who ys this whiche forgeueth synnes: and he said vnto the woman: thy faithe haith saued the: Go in peace.

## CHAPTER II.

“ Though threatening danger lin'd  
Each word he spoke, yet would he speake his mind.”

RETURNS TO HIS NATIVE COUNTY AS TUTOR IN A KNIGHT'S FAMILY—  
BECOMES AN OBJECT OF PERSECUTION—COMES TO LONDON—IS A  
POPULAR PREACHER.

WHEN Luther's intrepid defiance of the Pope had rendered him an object of universal conversation, Tyndale, having returned to his native county, was engaged as tutor and chaplain to the family of Sir John Welch, a knight of Gloucestershire, and a hospitable gentleman, who, keeping a good table, frequently enjoyed the company of the neighbouring prelates and clergy. With these visiters, his chaplain occasionally entered into controversy on the Lutheran opinions, and, grieved at the ignorance of the Roman Catholic teachers, warmly advocated the reading of the New Testament. This, as Fuller wittily says, led them to prefer the giving up Squire Welch's good cheer, rather than to have the sour sauce of Master Tyndale's company. The Squire's lady, who was a sensible woman, felt hurt when she saw these great men, whom she had been brought up to venerate, overcome in religious disputation, and asked Sir William Tyndale\* whether it was likely that she could prefer his judgment to that of such wealthy prelates. To this he thought proper not to reply, lest it should excite her temper, which he saw to be ruffled. But soon after, he translated Erasmus's "Enchiridion," and dedicated the manuscript to Sir John and his lady. They read it attentively, and became convinced of the spirituality of a Christian profes-

\* The title given at that time to all priests : after the Reformation it gradually gave place to the title of Reverend.

sion ; and thus Tyndale secured their high esteem and friendship. The beneficed clergy soon displayed their bitter hostility, and he was cited to appear before the ordinary. In his way thither, he spent the time in fervent prayer : the great object of his supplications was, that his heavenly Father would strengthen him, at all hazards, to stand firmly for the truth of his word. On his arrival, he found a numerous assemblage of his persecutors ; but either for fear of offending the hospitable knight, or by the secret providence of God, their mouths were shut, and nothing was laid to his charge. The ordinary, however, “ rated him like a dog.”

The persecuted Teacher, soon after this, consulted an old doctor, who had been chancellor to a bishop : he privately told him, that, in his opinion, the Pope was antichrist, but advised him by no means to avow any sentiment of the kind, as it would be at the peril of his life. Tyndale, however, soon proved himself incapable of concealment ; for being in company with a popish divine, he argued so conclusively in favour of a vernacular translation of the Bible, that the divine, unable to answer him, exclaimed, “ We had better be without God’s laws than the Pope’s.” This fired the spirit of Tyndale ; and, with holy indignation, he replied : “ I defy the Pope and all his laws ; and, if God give me life, ere many years the ploughboys shall know more of the Scriptures than you do :” a pledge which he amply redeemed by not only publishing the New Testament in English, adapted to the most refined society, but also in the orthography of the country people and ploughboys.

He now became so “ turmoiled” in the country, that he could no longer dwell there without imminent danger both to himself and to his worthy friends : in consequence of this, he left Gloucestershire, and preached frequently at Bristol, in London, and other places, to crowded congregations. He still continued his connexion with the Romish church, endeavouring in his sermons to win souls to Christ, while he avoided persecution by refraining from hard names, and from the pointed introduction of controversial topics. In this policy a naturally amiable temper must have greatly assisted him. His position was one of peculiar difficulty and

danger, and it required great talent to guide his course. Skillfully upholding the ark, he did not attempt *to pull down* the Dagon of his day; but error fell before truth, as Dagon fell before the ark of the Israelites at Ashdod.

A circumstance which took place at this time, shows the conduct of Tyndale to have been that of a man without guile, who judged of others by the measure of his own goodness. Erasmus had courteously commended Tonsall, then Bishop of London, as a patron of learning; and Tyndale was led to hope that a chaplaincy in his house would enable him, without molestation, to proceed in his great work of translating the Bible into English. He obtained from Sir John Welch an introduction to Sir H. Guildford, who recommended him to the Bishop. To secure his object, he translated one of Isocrates' Orations; and with this proof of his attainments in the Greek language, he waited upon Tonsall, hoping that his talent alone would secure for him a service in the bishop's house; but, as Fox quaintly says, "God gave him to find little favour in his sight." Thus disappointed, he found a comfortable asylum in the house of a pious and benevolent alderman, Humphrey Monmouth, and lived with him about six months of the year 1523.

This worthy citizen was, a few years after, sent to the Tower on suspicion of heresy; the principal crime laid to his charge being, his having aided Tyndale. The original articles, and Monmouth's memorial to the lord legate and the privy council, witnessed by Bishop Tonsall, are in the Harleian Collection of State Papers.\* It was with some painful apprehension that I read these documents. A wealthy merchant of the city of London committed to such a prison, on so dangerous a charge, with all the terrors of confiscation, torture, and death before him, unless he pleased the enemies of Tyndale! How great a temptation to publish any slander or calumny, however unfounded, against a poor friar at that time in exile! But his character was without a blemish, and Monmouth, imbued with honourable prin-

\* These papers are not dated; Strype ascribes them to 1528.

ciples, at every risk testified the truth. He thus narrates with candour all his knowledge of the character and conduct of his guest:—" Upon iiij yeres and a half past, and more, I herde the forsaide Sir William preache ij or iij sermondes, at St. Dunstones in the weste, in London, and after that I chaunced to meet with him, and with communycation I examyned him what lyvinge he had, he said, none at all, but he trusted to be with my lord of London in his service, and therefore I had the better fantasye to him. And afterwarde he wente to my lorde and spake to him, as he tolde me, and my lorde of London answered him that he had chaplaines inoughe, and he said to him that he would have no more at that time, and so the priest came to me againe, and besought me to helpe him, and so I toke him in my house half a year, and there he lived like a good priest as me thought, he studyed moste parte of the daie and of the nyght at his booke, and he woulde eat but sodden meate by his good will, nor drinke but small single beer; I never saw him were lynen about him in the space he was with me; I did promys him ten pounds sterling to praie for my father, mother, there sowles,\* and all christen sowles. I did paie yt him when he made his exchang to Ham-boro'. When I hard my lord of London preache at Powles Crosse that Sir William Tyndall had translated the New Testament in Englishe, and was noughtely translated, that was the first tyme that ever I suspected or knewe any evill by him, and shortly all the letters and treatyes that he sent me with dyuers copies of bookes that my servant did write, and the sermondes that the priest did make at St. Dunstanes, I did burne them in my howse, he that did write them did see it. I did borne them for feare of the translator more than for any yll that I knewe by them." The worthy citizen soon obtained his liberty, was

\* Light broke in gradually upon his mind, like the man who, having been born blind, suddenly received his sight, and said, "I see men as trees, walking." After he left England, he defended the real presence against Barnes, but very soon gave up that extraordinary delusion. In reply to More, he professes an historic faith in the perpetual virginity of our Lord's mother. It is interesting to trace the progress of his powerful mind in throwing off the errors which he had imbibed in his education.—See *Confutation of Tyndale*, fol. 249 and 260.

knighted, and in 1535 served his shrievalty. He died in 1537, and was buried at Alhallows church, near the Tower. He was a great ornament to the city, of good wealth, and great charity; he contributed largely to the printing of the New Testament and other pious books against the errors of Rome. By his will, he appointed Latimer, Barnes, and two other gospellers to preach thirty sermons at his parish church, which he thought would do more good than so many masses said for the repose of his soul; and he forbade the ordinary superstitions of candles and singing dirige, and ringing of bells at his funeral.\*

\* Strype's Stow, Vol. I. p. 375.



## CHAPTER III.

“ Toss'd in the ship of Providence, he sail'd  
 From place to place, his courage never fail'd.  
 The strength of his afflictions, added strength  
 Unto his soul.”

QUARLES.

GOES INTO VOLUNTARY EXILE — CONFERS WITH LUTHER, AND PRINTS  
 THE NEW TESTAMENT IN ENGLISH — SINGULAR MISTAKE OF DR.  
 TOWNLEY — DESCRIPTION OF THE TWO EDITIONS.

SATISFIED that there was no convenient place in all England in which he could mature his labours, by publishing a translation of the Scriptures, Tyndale, in the latter part of the year 1523, became a voluntary exile, never to return to his native country.

Aided by the donation of ten pounds from the benevolent alderman, he quitted his hospitable mansion, and sailed for Ham-  
 burgh, whence he proceeded to Saxony, to confer with his contemporaries, the immortal Reformers; and there he completed the first and most important portion of his work. Luther, who had just finished his German version of the New Testament, not only encouraged the pious refugee to proceed with a similar publication in English, but probably rendered very material assistance towards the expenses of so hazardous an undertaking. Two more illustrious men never met; raised by Providence for one object, the diffusion of scriptural light. Alike in great literary attainments and devoted piety, they differed widely in temperament and in their circumstances. We find the one patronized by princes, the other a poverty-stricken exile. The great Saxon, impetuous and bold, was still tinctured with superstition: the illustrious Englishman, not less determined, but amiable and humble, possessed a strength of mind enabling him to throw off trammels which embarrassed many of the

Reformers. He took for his motto, 2 Tim. ii. 24, "The servant of the Lord must not stryve, but be peaceable vnto all men, and ready to teach, and one that can suffer the evel with mekenesse."\* The heroic efforts of Luther, and of the princes who supported him, spread scriptural light in Germany. The mild and unassuming, but pious and determined efforts of Tyndale, and a few persecuted martyrs, gloriously illuminated the British empire; and the great exertions of his countrymen in later ages have extended that heavenly light to millions of every tongue, and nation, and people.

It was at Wyttemburg, that with intense application and labour Tyndale completed his translation of the New Testament. In this he was assisted by his pious friend, the eminently learned John Frith, who, with William Roy, acted as his amanuenses. The printing of this important work was attended with difficulty. One edition, probably of three thousand, was prepared for general circulation: this was quickly followed by a more elegant edition in 4to. with glosses, commenced at Cologne in 1526, and finished at Worms or Wyttemburg. The type, cuts, and ornaments of both these books, are those used by the German printers on the Rhine. The popular error which ascribes either of them to the Antwerp press, is the more extraordinary, as no similar type was used there; nor did Tyndale visit that city until the year 1530. In addition to these circumstances, we have the positive evidence of Brovius,† as to the one being printed at Wittemburg, in 1525; and that of Cochlæus, who interrupted the printing of the 4to. with glosses, at Cologne, in 1526. The order in which these two editions were published, is clearly shown by Tyndale himself. In the epistle at the end of this volume, he says, "That the rudnes of the worke, nowe at THE FYRST TYME, offende them not." No such expression or idea is conveyed in the prologue to the 4to. with the glosses; but, on the contrary, he says: ¶ "After hit had pleasyd God to put in my mynde, and also to geve me grace to translate this forerehearsed newe testament into oure englysshe tonge, howe-

\* Preface to *The Wicked Mammon*.

† Bp. Kennet's MSS. in the British Museum.

soever we haue done it, I supposed yt very necessary to put you in remembraunce of certayne poyntes," &c.

From this it appears that he first published the text, and then proceeded to republish it with a prologue and notes. This agrees exactly with the words of Sir Thomas More,\* when, charging Tyndale with mistranslating certain terms, he says: "But surely the worde congregacyion, wyth the circunstaunces in the texte: wolde not haue serued *when he translated yt fyrste*, to make the englyshe reader to take it for the chyrch, no more then idolys for ymages; But mary *he hath added vnto his translacion* such circunstaunces *synnys*,—But all his glose is therin, that he wyll saye he taketh them for none heresyess."

George Joye, in his controversy with Tyndale in 1535, refers to this octavo as *the first edition*. Joye having altered some important words in the text, and published an edition of the New Testament, as Tyndale's correction, without his knowledge, he thus endeavoured to defend himself: "Wherefore according to his owne desier in the ende of *hys first new testament*, desyering all that be able to mende that as was amysse in it, and to geue the wordis (where he did it not himself) their right significacions: for he confesseth euen there that *hys first translacion* was a thinge borne before the tyme, rude and imperfit, rather begun then fynished, not yet hauing her right shape."†

With regard to the time when these volumes were published, Strype has recorded, from a private paper left by John Fox, that one John Pykas, when in trouble for alleged heresy, deposed, March 7, 1527, that, about two years previously, he bought in Colchester, of a Lombard merchant,‡ the New Testament in English for four shillings: he does not say that it was printed; but, supposing it to be one of the first importation of printed Testaments, when manuscript copies were selling for very considerable sums, and the sale was attended with great risk, it may account for the charge of four shillings for so small a volume.

\* Confutation of Tyndale, p. 117.

† George Joyes Apologie, small 8vo. 1535, sig. 36. iii. and the Epistle at the end of this volume.

‡ Any merchant trading to foreign parts.

In the preface to the *Wicked Mammon*, published in May, 1528, Tyndale states, that the New Testament was completed two years previously; thus confirming the account given by Cochlaeus, one of the most active enemies of the Reformation. In his *Memoir of the Life and Writings of Luther*, he thus narrates the routing of the two pious aliens, Tyndale and Frith. Roy had quitted them, and gone to Strasburg.

ANNO DOMINI M.D.XXVI.

“Two English heretics, who had formerly been at Wittemberg, not only sought to convert the merchants who had secretly maintained them during exile, but even hoped that the whole of the English nation, without consulting the king’s feelings, would in a short time become Lutherans, by means of Luther’s New Testament, which they had translated into the English language. They had come to Cologne, that they might forward many thousand printed copies of the Testament thus translated, secreted under other goods, into England. Such was their confidence in the success of this attempt, that at their first interview they ordered the printers to put six thousand copies to press; but fearing that a great loss would be sustained if the enterprise failed, they agreed to print only three thousand, it being easy, if they sold well, to print another edition. Pomernus had already sent letters to the saints among the English, and Luther himself had written to the king. When he supposed that the New Testament would soon appear, such was his delight, that he inflated his followers with vain expectations, and they became intoxicated with joy, and revealed the secret before due time with their useless boasting.” The narrative goes on to state, that Cochlaeus, having prepared an edition of Rupert’s Commentary on Matthew, went to Cologne to superintend the printing of it, and happening to employ the same printers, he heard such whispers as led this divine to ply some of the workmen with drink, and while intoxicated, he drew from them their master’s secret. His narrative thus continues—“Here having become better acquainted with the printers, he hears them occasionally ejaculate over the glass with confidence—let the Eng-

lish king and cardinal be willing or not, all England shall in a short space of time become Lutherans. He heard also that two Englishmen there, LEARNED, ELOQUENT, AND SKILLED IN LANGUAGES, made it a matter of exultation, but he never found an opportunity of seeing or speaking to them. Having invited some of the printers to his house, when they had become heated with wine, one of them in private conversation revealed to him the secret, how England was to be brought to Luther's side; namely, that three thousand copies of Luther's New Testament, translated into English, were printing, and that they had already advanced as far as signature K, in fours. That the cost would be abundantly supplied by the English merchants, who would secretly convey the work, when finished, throughout all England, and extensively distribute it before the king or the cardinal (Wolsey) could know of or prevent it. Cochlaeus, agitated with fear and wonder, outwardly dissembled his sadness, but soon revolving sorrowfully in his mind the extent of the danger, he devised means to paralyze this effort. He went privately to Herman Rinck, Bart., a counsellor and senator of Cologne, who was personally acquainted with the emperor and with the king of England, and opened to him the whole affair, as (thanks to the wine) he had discovered it. The baronet, to satisfy himself that the information was correct, sent a man to search the house where the work was carried on; the printer acknowledged that it was in hand, and that a quantity of paper was purchased for it. Upon this he went to the senate, and obtained an injunction, forbidding the printer to proceed. The two English heretics taking with them the printed sheets, escaped and sailed up the Rhine to Worms, where the people were immoderately in favour of Luther, that they might there finish their undertaking. Rinck and Cochlaeus admonished the king, the cardinal, and the bishop about these proceedings, that all diligence might be used to stop this pernicious merchandize from entering any of the English ports. It is reported that Lord C. Tunstall, a most learned man, at that time bishop of London but now of Durham, when he had obtained one of these copies, declared to

a great assembly in London that he had found upwards of two thousand errors and corruptions in that book.”

This narrative bears every mark of authenticity, written by an eye-witness of repute, who published it to the world in 1549, at which time his accuracy was not questioned. Yet, as that ingenious antiquary, Mr. Lewis,\* had treated it lightly, I visited Cologne, in 1830, to ascertain, if possible, how far it was correct. The city secretary, Mr. Vaux, aided by Dr. Ernst Weyden, most readily and kindly searched the Archives, and found that Herman Rinck was a senator in 1526, and exactly such a man as he is represented to be by Cochlaeus. These gentlemen pointed out the printer's house in which this occurrence took place, and expressed the fullest confidence in the statement which I have extracted from the Life of Luther.

It is worthy of remark, that the printers supposed that this English New Testament was translated from Luther, which has probably given rise to the supposition that Tyndale's version was not made from the Greek. Lutheran was then a general term of reproach. The zeal of the monks to keep the people in ignorance, led them to assert, that these heretical Lutherans had invented two new languages, which they called Hebrew and Greek†—that all who studied Hebrew became Jews—that the New Testament was a modern invention by Luther; so that every translation, however faithfully rendered from the Greek, was called Luther's New Testament. Tyndale would have found it impracticable to translate from the German, but exceedingly easy to render it from the Greek, with which he had been familiar from his youth. A careful and minute comparison of the text with the Greek, the vulgate Latin, and Luther's German, will fully prove that it is translated faithfully from the Greek, although there can be no doubt that he availed himself,

\* Hist. of the English Bibles, 8vo., 1739, p. 76.

† Sir Thos. More relates a curious instance of the ignorance of a learned monk :—“ A lerned prieste thorow out all y<sup>e</sup> gospels scraped out *diabolus* and wrote *Jesus Cristus*, bycause he thought the deuyls name was not mete to stande in so good a place.” If this learned monk understood Latin, how would he, after such an alteration, read Matt. xiii. 39, or 1 John iii. 8?—Confutation, p. 126.



in revising his labours, of every aid within his reach. He might also have been assisted by conferring with the German Reformers on difficult passages, as any wise man would have done under similar circumstances; but he never deviated from his conscientious idea of the meaning of the Greek text, to please any man or party.\* It is more my province to exhibit a faithful narrative, drawn from authentic sources, than to notice the errors which have been made by others relative to this book; but the very singular mistake of Dr. Townley cannot be passed by. The Dr. has printed in a large black letter, what he calls a specimen of Tyndale's first translation, with the gloss. At the sale of his library, the volume from which the extract was made, came into my possession. It proved to be Coverdale's; a totally distinct translation from that of Tyndale, an edition hitherto unknown, and which probably preceded his Bible in 1535. In addition to this strange blunder, there are twenty-nine errors in printing a short quotation.†

Many pirated editions of this book were printed by the Dutchmen, and particularly at Antwerp: the object being profit only, they were negligently printed, without Tyndale's knowledge, and were exceedingly incorrect. The most correct of the surreptitious editions was edited by an exile, G. Joy; but he, without acknowledgment, made some important alterations in the text, for which he afterwards apologized. This edition was printed by the widow of Christopher of Endhoven, in Antwerp: her husband had perished in England during his imprisonment for selling a pirated edition, in 1531. Three years previously to this, John Raymond, a Dutchman, severely suffered, for causing 1500 of Tyndale's New Testament to be printed at Antwerp, and for bringing 500 into England. The price at which they were usually sold, was thirteen pence for the small editions, and half-a-crown with the glosses; a considerable sum in those days.

The first of Tyndale's editions is a small 8vo. handsomely printed: it consists of 336 leaves, of which 333 contain the text, the remaining three being occupied by the epistle to the reader

\* Frith on the Sacrament, 8vo. 1548, f. 20.

† Illustrations of Bib. Lit. Vol. II. p. 377.

and the errata. Of this book only two copies have been discovered: one, wanting forty-eight leaves, is in the Cathedral Library of St. Paul's; the other, from which the present edition is printed, adorns the Baptist Library at Bristol. This rare and precious volume is in the most beautiful preservation, the cuts emblazoned, and every leaf ornamented, as if intended for presentation to some royal or noble personage: the title, if it ever had one, is lost. The type is a neat German character, similar to that of Hans Luft, who, at Wyttenburg, and at Marburg, printed nearly all Tyndale's works. This literary gem was first discovered by John Murray, one of Lord Oxford's collectors. His Lordship generously rewarded him with an annuity of twenty pounds for his life, and gave him one year's money in advance. On the decease of Lord Oxford in 1741, while the annuity was still paying, the library was bought by Mr. Osborne, who, not knowing the rarity and value of so precious a volume, sold the treasure for fifteen shillings to the celebrated collector, Mr. Ames. On his death in 1760, it was bought by John Whyte for fourteen guineas and a half: he, after keeping it exactly sixteen years, sold it to Dr. Gifford for twenty guineas. In 1784, this volume, together with the finest collection of early English bibles in the kingdom, was left by Dr. Gifford, then one of the librarians at the British Museum, to the Baptist College at Bristol, where it has been most carefully preserved. Through the public feeling and liberality of the principal of the college, permission was cheerfully given to print from it the present edition, which is a literal copy of the original, with fac-similes of the wood-cuts and ornaments.

The edition with glosses was an elegant small 4to. with handsome cuts. The portion which has been discovered was printed at Cologne; but probably the volume was completed at Worms. A fragment, containing the prologue and the gospel of Matthew to the twenty-second chapter, is in the possession of that intelligent bookseller, Mr. Thomas Rodd, who has long promised to publish it, accompanied with much curious information. The prologue, on seven leaves, has been, with great alterations, both of omission and addition, several times re-pub-

lished under the title of A Pathway into the Scriptures, by Tyndale. It is to be regretted that an admirable tract, much deformed and mutilated, was thus published under his name. There are a few alterations in the text from that of the 8vo. The references and glosses are in the margin. The reader may judge of the whole from the following specimens.

✠ Salt. Matt. 5. When the preachers ceaste to preache goddes worde, then muste they nedes be oppressed and trod vnder fote with mannes tradicions. Matt. 6. Rewarde them openly. ye shall not thynke, that oure dedes deserve ani thyng of god as a labourar deserueth hys hyre. For all good thynges come of the bounteousnes, liberalite, mercy, promyses and trewth of god bi the deseruinge of Christes blood only, &c. \*Syngle. The eye is single when a man in all his dedes loketh butt on the wil of god, and loketh nott for laude, honour or eni other rewarde in this worlde. Nother ascrybeth heven or a hyer rounge in heven vnto his dedes: but accepteth heven as a thing purchased bi the blood of Christe, and worketh frely for loves sake only.”

The following table shows all the alterations or improvements in the text of the 4to. edition.

1525. 8vo.	MATTHEW.	1526. 4to.
prepare the lordes way,	Ch. 3	prepaire ye the lordes waye,
Beholde the londe of Zabulon	— 4	the londe of zabulon
it lighteth all them which	— 5	it lighteth all those which
the lawe, or the prophets	— —	the lawe other the prophettes :
nor mothes corrupte.	— 6	nor yet moththes corrupte :
he shall lene the one,	— —	he shall lene to the one
with the same	— 7	with that same
but the sinners to repentaunce	— 9	but synners to repentaunce
shalbe tacken awaye from them.	— —	shall be taken from them.
the londe	— —	that londe
power over all vnclene	— 10	power agaynst vnclene
that the kyngdome	— —	howe the kyngdom
nor brasse,	— —	nether brasse
till ye goo thence.	— —	tyll ye go from thence.
He that hath eares to heare,	— 11	He that hathe eares to heare
let him here.		whith all, let him heare.

1525. 8vo.  
cites, in which most  
in tyre and sidon they had

and asshes  
and he stretched it forthe  
and bringeth forth,  
which soweth them,  
which when it is full,  
and the blinde to se. and they  
gloryfyed  
in the morninge  
which be made of men.  
y shall be baptysed with :  
is not myne to geve :  
and stoned another.

MATTHEW.

1526. 4to.

Ch. 11	the cites, in the whiche mooste
— —	in tyre and in sydon : they wolde have
— —	and in asshes
— 12	and he streached forthe,
— 13	and brynge forth,
— —	which soweth it
— —	the which when it is full,
— 15	the blynde to se, and gloryfyed
— 16	and in the morninge
— 19	which be made chaste of men.
— 20	I shalbe baptysed with all
— —	ys not myne to geve you :
— 21	stoned another.

## CHAPTER IV.

“ Enemies I shall haue, many a shoren crowne  
 With forked cappes and gaye croosys of golde  
 Which to maynteyne ther ambitions renowne  
 Are glad laye people in ignorance to holde  
 Yet to shewe the verite, one maye be bolde  
 All though it be a proverbe daylye spoken  
 Who that tellyth trouth, his head shalbe broken.”

TYNDALE'S OLDE TREATYSE.

VIOLENT OPPOSITION TO THE NEW TESTAMENT IN ENGLAND—SEVERE  
 PERSECUTION OF THOSE IN WHOSE POSSESSION IT WAS FOUND—  
 PUBLICLY BURNT AT PAUL'S CROSS.

No sooner was this volume published, than the most extraordinary efforts were made to exterminate it. The contemporary opinions expressed as to the merits of the translation, and the narrative of the attempts to destroy it, are intimately blended together. The public will now have an opportunity, for the first time, of forming a dispassionate judgment as to the reasons assigned by those nobles and prelates who sought to destroy it; and of weighing them with those of more modern prelates, highly distinguished for learning and piety, who counted it worthy to be the basis of our present version: a translation which stands unrivalled, and has proved to be the bread of life to myriads now singing the anthems of heaven. Immediately on the circulation of the New Testament, the English prelates were actively engaged in attempts to extinguish and destroy what they alleged to be the light and seed of heresy.\*

\* The vulgate latin translation, which occupied the time of Jerome fifteen years, was made “amidst many contradictions, reproaches, and the most bitter invectives,” of that sect which afterwards adopted and preferred it, as the standard of faith, to the scriptures in the original languages.—See GEDDES' PROSPECTUS, p. 45.

On the 23rd of October, 1526,\* Tonstall, bishop of London, issued an injunction or prohibition against the New Testament in English. “Wherefore we, understanding by the report of divers credible persons, and also by the evident appearance of the matter, that many children of iniquitie, mayntayners of Luthers sect, blinded through extreame wickedness, wandring from the way of truth and the catholike fayth, craftily have translated the New Testament into our English tongue, intermeddling therewith many hereticall articles and erroneous opinions, pernicious and offensive, seducing the simple people, attempting by their wicked and perverse interpretations to prophanate the maiestie of the scripture, which hitherto have remained undefiled, and craftily to abuse the most holy word of God, and the true sense of the same. Of the which translation there are many books imprinted, some with glosses, and some without, containing in the English tongue that pestiferous and most pernicious poyson dispersed throughout all our diocesse of London in great number, which truely without it be speedily forsene, without doubt will contaminate and infect the flocke committed unto us with most deadly poison and heresie, to the grievous perill and danger of the soules committed to our charge, and the offence of God’s divine maiestie. Wherefore we ... command that within thirtie days ... under pain of excommunication and incurring the suspicion of heresie, they do bring in and really deliver unto our Vicar generall all and singular such books as containe the translation of the New Testament in the English tongue.”

On the 24th of February, 1527, Sebastian Harris, curate of Kensington, was proceeded against for heresy, he having the English Testament translated by William Hochyn (Tyndale), presbyter, and brother Roy.

Not contented with calling in these dreaded volumes, the bishop attempted a wholesale destruction of them by a stratagem in which he singularly outwitted himself. Being acquainted with a merchant named Packington, who was on friendly terms with Tyndale, he employed him to buy all the copies of the English

\* Wilkins’ Concilia, tom. 3, p. 706.



Testament. “The bishop thinking that he had God by the too, when in dede he had (as after he thought) the devil by the fiste, said, gentle maister Packington, do your diligence and get them, and with al my hart I will paye for them, whatsoever thei cost you, for the bokes are erronious and naughte, and I entend surely to destroy them all, and to burne them at



Paules Crosse.

Tyndale sold him the books, saying, I shal gett moneye of hym for these bokes, to bryng myself out of debt, and the whole world shall cry out upon the burning of Goddes worde. And the overplus of the money that shal remain to me, shal make me more studious to correct the sayd New Testament, and so newly to imprint the same. And so forwarde went the bargain, the byshop had the bokes, Packyngton the thankes, and Tyndale had the money.” Afterwards, more New Testaments came thick and threefold into England. Sir Thomas More questioned George Constantine, a prisoner for heresy, how Tyndale and his friends were supported; and he frankly told the lord chancellor, “It is the bishop of London that hath holpen vs, for he hath bestowed

emonge vs a great deale of moneye in Newe Testamentes to burne theim, and that hath been and yet is our onely succour and comfort.”\* The destruction of these books, according to Lord Herbert of Cherbury, was on the 4th of May, 1530 : this is an error, for it certainly took place in 1528.† Tyndale seriously asks, what Tonsall had done for Christ’s church, that he was made bishop of London and then of Durham. “ Was it that he burnt the Newe Testament, callinge it doctrinam peregrinam, straunge lernynge !!” ‡

Necessity drove the Reformers to a secret circulation of these silent destroyers of popery: notwithstanding the active exertions of More, Wolsey, and Tonsall to prevent it, they were extensively distributed. Richard Herman, a merchant of the staple at Antwerp, was a considerable exporter of the prohibited books to England, at a great sacrifice of his fortune. Dr. Barnes and Mr. Fish dispensed them in London, Mr. Garret at Oxford, and pious reformers in every part of the kingdom: all this was done in confidence seldom betrayed.

In January, 1527, the Bishop proceeded into Essex, to discover how far his injunction had been obeyed. His course was marked with terror, many poor prisoners for heresy were examined before him. John Tyball deposed, that he first saw the New Testament in English about April, 1526, and at Michaelmas following came to London, and bought one for three shillings and twopence of friar Barons; requesting that he would keep it close; that in conversation the friar made a twyte of the manuscript copies, and said: “ A point for them, for they are not to be regarded toward the new printed Testament in English.” John Necton deposed, that vicar Constantine, in November, 1526, directed him to Mr. Fish, of whom he bought twenty or thirty copies of the great volume; that Constantine had fifteen or sixteen of the biggest, and sold five or six to persons in London; and that about Easter, 1527, he bought of G. Usher, servant to

\* Hall’s Chronicle, xxi. Henry VIII.

† Sir Thomas More attempts to justify this transaction in his Dialogues, which were published in 1529.

‡ Practice of Prelates.

the parson of Honey-lane, eighteen New Testaments of the small volume; and that about Christmas, 1527, a Dutchman, who in Easter following was a prisoner in the Fleet, offered him 300 copies for 16*l.* 5*s.*: this was probably John Raimund.

Awful were the torments inflicted upon those who, in disobedience to the proclamation, dared to read this proscribed book. An aged labourer, father Harding, was seen reading by a wood side, while his more fashionable neighbours were gone to hear mass. His house was broken open, and under the flooring boards were discovered English books of holy scripture: the poor old man was hurried to prison, and thence to the stake, where he was brutally treated, and his body burnt to ashes.

The rigour with which these books were suppressed, would naturally excite a strong desire to possess them. It was also calculated to awaken an intense interest in examining their contents. Imminent danger attending the enjoyment of religious observances has a tendency to exalt the mind to the happiest state of feeling which those privileges are capable of producing. Such must have been the case with poor old Harding, who had been imprisoned some years before on the charge of heresy, and knew that there was no mercy extended to a second offence; yet in secret, by the wood side, with the Testament in his hand, he took repeated draughts of the water of life; or, secluded in his humble cottage, he raised the floor, found the precious but forbidden book, and richly enjoyed the heavenly food. With excited feelings, he might imagine that the voice of the inspired writer was peculiarly addressed to him, "Eat, O friend, drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved." The most powerful or learned of men might envy such moments, enjoyed by a poor old persecuted labourer.

Many were fined, imprisoned, and put to death for reading the New Testament. Lawrence Staple was persecuted in 1531 for concealing four copies in his sleeve, and giving them to Bilney, who was burnt. Staple saved his life by abjuring. The sentence of the court of Star Chamber upon John Tyndale, a merchant of London, a brother of the martyr, and Thomas Patmore, a merchant, was mild in comparison with that on Harding. It was,

“ That each of them should be set upon a horse, and their faces to the horse’s tail, and to have papers upon their heads, and upon their gowns or cloaks to be tacked or pinned with the said New Testaments and other books, and at the standard in Chepe should be made a great fire, whereinto every of them should throw their said books, and farther to abide such fines to be paid to the king as should be assessed upon them.”\* The fine, according to Fox, was to a ruinous amount. What a spectacle to the citizens,—two of their wealthy and honourable Lombard merchants treated with indignities, imprisonment and fine, for having the New Testament in their possession! In mercy the progress of the reformation was slow: had it been a rapid revolution, the spirit of retaliation might have produced most awful consequences.

The persecution was extended by the influence of Wolsey to Antwerp. Richard Herman, a merchant and citizen, “ for that he dyd bothe with his gooddis and pollicie, to his great hurt and hynderans in this world, helpe to the setting forth of the Newe Testament in Englysshe,” was expelled from his freedom in the company of British merchants. Queen Boleyn made an order for his restoration under her hand and seal, May 14, 1535.†

Hollinshed, the historian, with great simplicity states the natural result of prohibition. “ Diuers persons that were detected to vse reading of the New Testament, set forth by Tindale, were punished by order of Sir T. More, who helde greatly against such bookes, *but still the number of them dayly encreased.*”

The burning of God’s word was advocated by the church of Rome, and approved by one of her ablest defenders, more than fifty years after it was perpetrated. Dr. Martin, reader of divinity to the College at Douay, says: “ The Catholicke church of our countrie did not il to forbid and burne suche bookes which were so translated by Tyndal and the like, as being not in deede God’s booke, word, or scripture, but the Diuels word.”‡ To which Fulke replied, “ Neither can your heathenish and barbarous burning of

\* State paper, British Museum.

† Idem.

‡ Martin’s *Discoverie of the Corruptions of Holy Scripture*, p. 65; and Fulke’s *Reply to Martin*, p. 143, edit. 8vo. 1583.

the holy scripture so translated, nor your blasphemie in calling it the Deuils worde, be excused for any fault in translation which you have discovered as yet, or euer shall be able to descrye."

Tyndale frequently adverts to the burning of the New Testament, and he anticipated with pious resignation the fiery test by which his faith was to be tried. "Some man wil aske parauenture why I take the laboure to make this worke, in so moch as they will brunne it, seinge they brunt the gospel. I answere in brunninge the New Testamente they did none other thinge then I loked for, no more shal they doo if the brunne me also, if it be Gods will it shall be so."\* At the close of one of his most interesting tracts, he says, "Whoso fyndythe or redythe this lettre, put it furthe in examynacyon, and suffre it not to be hydde or destroyed, but multiplyed, for no man knoweth what proffyt may come therof. For he that compiled it, purposyth with Goddes helpe to mayntayne vnto the deathe, yf neade be. And therefore all Christen men and women, praye that the worde of God maye be vnbounde, and delyuered from the power of Antichrist, and renne amonge his people. Amen."†

Great zeal was manifested to decry the translation as heretical. Bishop Tostall declared that there were more than two thousand heresies in it. If he meant that there were more than two thousand texts in the New Testament against popery, it would be difficult to controvert his assertion.

The prior of Newnham Abbey, in 1527, wrote to the bishop of Lincoln, relative to opinions called heretical, held by George Joye, of Peter College, Cambridge. The first heresy of which he complained was, that a simple preacher might be the means of a sinner's conversion, and had the same power of binding and loosing as a pope, cardinal, or bishop. The prior also says, "that the scripture in Englysshe wold make sedition, brede errours and heresies, and so be euell." Joye replied: "Wo be to you that say that thing which is good to be euell, and that which is sweet to

\* Preface to the Wicked Mammon.

† End of his "Compendious olde Treatyse, shewyng how that the people ought to have the Scriptures in Englyssh."

be bitter.”—“Thus is the holye, cleare, good and swete gospell of Christe belyed and blasphemed of you. It is only unsavery, kovered and darke to you that peryshe.” Fuller, referring to the hostility of the monks and prelates, relates a melancholy instance of those feelings having extended to a civil officer of the corporation of London. “When Tyndale’s translation came over to England, O how were the popish clergy cut to the heart. How did their blear eyes smart at the shining of the Gospel in the vulgar tongue. Hall heard the town clerk of London swear a great oath, that he would cut his own throat rather than the Gospel should be read in English, but he brake promes and hanged himself.” \*

Robert Ridley, a priest,† wrote “to maister Henry Golde, chaplayne to my lorde of Canterbury,” a letter in which he uses language in all probability current at the time. “No man would receaue a gospell of soch damned and practised heretikes, thow it wer trew.” From his remarks, he must have read the edition with glosses. He charges Tyndale with having in his preface treated moral conduct with indifference. The marginal note which directs to the paragraph so captiously criticised is: “A trewe christyn man beleueth that hevyn ys hys alredy by christes purchasesinge, and therfore loveth, and worketh, to honoure god only, and to drawe althinges to God.” The point at issue was this: The duty of man being to love God with all his heart, and his neighbour as himself, whether he could do more than his duty, and by such works of supererogation merit the forgiveness of past sins, and even set over some of their meritorious works to the account of others. This Tyndale denies, ascribing all the merit of the forgiveness of sins to the Saviour only; and he maintains that the happy, holy influence of a good hope through faith will cause the sinner so freely pardoned, to devote himself to the glory of God by promoting the happiness of man. Thus he argues: “As no naturall sonne that is his father’s heyre, doeth his

\* Church History, book 5.

† Original in British Museum. Ridley was present at the examination of Pykas in Essex, referred to at p. 17.

father's will be cause he wolde be heyre, that he is alreddy be birth:—but of puer love doeth he that he doeth. And axe him why he doeth eny thyng that he doeth, he answereth: my father bade, it is my father's will, it pleaseth my father. Bond seruauntes worke for hyre, children for love; for there father, with all he hath, is theres alreddy. So doeth a christen man frely all that he doeth, considereth nothyng but the will of God, and his neghboures wealth only. Yf y live chaste, I doo hit nott to obteyne heven therby, For then shulde y doo wronge to the bloud of Christ: Christes bloud hath obteyned me that. Nether that y loke for an hyer roume in heven, then they shall have whych live in wedlocke, other then a hoare of the stewes, yf she repent.” These are sentiments totally opposed to the inference drawn from them by the angry priest. Ridley then proceeds to find fault with the text: “by this translation shal we losse al thes cristian wordes, penaunce, charite, confession, grace, prest, chirch which he alway calleth a congregation. ye shal not neede to accuse this translation. It is accused and damned by the consent of the prelates and lerned men. And commanded to be brynt both heir and beyonde the see, wher is mony hundreth of them brynt. So that it is to layt now to offer reson why that be condempned, and whiche be the fawte and errours. Shew the people, that ye be maid to declare vnto them that these bowkes be condemned by the Cownsell, and profownde examinacion of the prelates and fathers of the chirche.” The reformers were victorious in argument. The only triumph (if such it can be called) of the enemies to the spread of scriptural knowledge, was the burning such as they could not silence in controversy, however unimpeachable their morals, bright and holy their piety, and useful their lives.

## CHAPTER V.

“ More’s well refuted arguments proclaim,  
 Tyndale’s great honor, his adversaries shame,  
 He was the shield of truth, the scourge of error,  
 This Island’s triumph, and proud Babel’s terror.”

THE LORD CHANCELLOR, SIR THOMAS MORE, EXERTS MOST POWERFUL  
 TALENT AGAINST TYNDALE.

SIR Thomas More entered most heartily into the controversy with Tyndale, and displayed a fertile wit and great genius in defending the Church of Rome. He well knew that he had no chance with such an antagonist, either from Scripture or reason, and he shielded himself in tradition, antiquity, miracles, and mystery. He asserted that the written word was not the whole revealed will of God, but that the unwritten traditions of the church are of equal authority. His mode of *arguing* to prove this important point is “ *I take it*: that the worde of God vnwryten is of as greate authoryte, as certayn, and as sure, as ys hys worde wryten in the Scrypture, which poynt is so faste and sure, pytched vpon the rocke, our sauour Cryst hymself, that neyther Luther, Tyndale, nor Huskyn, nor all the hell houndes that the deuyll hath in his kenell, neuer hytherto could nor whyle god lyueth in heuen and the deuyll lyeth in hell neuer hereafter shall (barke they, bawle they neuer so fast) be able to wreste it out.”\* When he speaks of the opinions of the reformers on other points, he uses language equally charitable:

\* Apology, f. 32 ; Confutation, fol. 176.



“all apparycyons they mocke at, and all the myracles they blaspheme, and say the deuyll doth all,—as yf the deuyll had (with) his owne handes marked eche of them an .H. in the forehede with a fayre hote yron fet out of the fyre of hell.”\* These are the words of the learned, witty, and eloquent More, who, upon any subject but religion, may be justly called a great man. Tyndale destroys this visionary castle of Tradition,† by a simple but irresistible argument, the sum of which is, that the written word of God is his revealed will, perfect as its Divine Author, with whom it was impossible to misstate or omit any thing, and who has declared all those to be cursed who add to or diminish from his will so revealed.

The great Lord Chancellor More published nine volumes of controversy against Tyndale and Barnes, seven of which are against Tyndale: four of these are in folio. To an antiquary, these tomes are peculiarly interesting. It is a conflict between two men possessed of giant minds, in decided opposition to each other. Tyndale is chaste; More licentious: Tyndale liberal, but devout; More a bigot. Tyndale triumphed in argument; and More contrived to have him imprisoned.

The character of this powerful persecutor of Tyndale presents to us an extraordinary compound: he was a witty companion; a gloomy fanatic: a beloved relative; a religious tyrant: an en-

\* Confutation, Vol. II. fol. 232 & 233.

† These *unwritten* traditions have been *printed*. They form a small 8vo. volume of extreme rarity, by Dr. Richard Smyth, the celebrated popish reader of divinity in Oxford, imprinted by Thomas Petit, 1547. These traditions, the learned Dr. gravely tells us, “we must both beleue stedfastly, and also fulfill obedientlye vnder payne of damnation euer to endure. They are—the sacrament of the Lord’s supper, only to be given by a priest—to be taken fasting—the wine to have water mingled with it—the consecration of the elements—to be kept in the pyxe or boxe at church—prayers for the dead—christening of infants, which necessary thinge hangeth onely vpon the apostles tradition wythout anye scripture that can prove it”—singing in public worship—praying towards the east—elevating and worshipping the host—making the sign of the cross—worshipping the crucifix—observing and not fasting on Sunday—keeping Easter and holydays—putting pictures and images in churches—fasting in Lent and on every Wednesday and Friday—holy water—priests not to marry—Mary continued a virgin until death, and that her body is in heaven.”—Dr. Smith was appointed to argue with Bp. Ridley prior to his martyrdom. A droll story is related of him by Fox.—Acts and Monuments, Vol. II. p. 538. Edit. 1631.

lightened statesman, who ably argues against sanguinary laws;\* a bigoted persecutor, who imbued his hands in the blood of the reformers: a philosopher who, on every Friday and saint's eve, scourged his own body with whips made of knotted cords, and then, as a further punishment, wore a hair shirt next to his lacerated skin. So persevering and extensive were More's efforts to destroy Tyndale, that his biographer compares the exiled reformer to a hunted hare with twenty brace of greyhounds after him. The dignified clergy, delighted with these efforts to support their falling hierarchy, raised the sum of five thousand pounds, which they pressed upon his acceptance; but he nobly refused to take one penny. He foresaw that the Reformation would prevail, and thus addressed his son: "I beseech our Lord, that some of us, as high as we seme to sitt vpon the mountains, treadinge hereticks vnder our fete like antes, live not the day to be at league and composition with them." †

\* MORE, THE CHAMPION OF POPERY.

He had in his garden at Chelsea a tree to which he caused prisoners, charged with heresy, to be tied and whipped: this he called the tree of life. After seeing this degrading cruelty practised upon a gentleman of the Temple, named Bainham, he went to the Tower to glut his eyes with the writhing of his prisoner upon the rack.—Bayley's Tower.

His words breathe out cruelty: "There shold haue ben more burned by a great many than there haue ben wythin this seuen yere laste passed. The lakke whereof I fere me will make more burned within this seuen yere next commynge, then ellys sholdehaue neded to haue ben burned in seuen score." This was for differing in religious sentiments.—Confutation, p. 266.

"Our Sauour wyll saye to Tyndale: Thou art accursed Tyndall, the sonne of the deuyll; for neyther fleshe nor bloude hath taught the these heresyas, but thyn owne father the deuyll that is in hell."—Confutation, Vol. II. p. 32.

MORE, AN ENLIGHTENED SENATOR.

Extracts from Utopia, or the Happy Republic:—

"Slavery is the punishment even of the greatest crimes.—Utopus seemed to doubt whether those different forms of religion might not all come from God, who might inspire men differently, he being possibly pleased with a variety in it. And so he thought it was a very indecent and foolish thing for any man to frighten and threaten other men to believe any thing because it seemed true to him: he reckoned that the force of truth would break forth and shine by the force of argument and a winning gentleness: they do not punish them, because they lay this down as a ground, that a man cannot make himself believe any thing he pleases; nor do they drive any to dissemble their thoughts by threatenings, so that men are not tempted to lie or disguise their opinions among them; which being a sort of fraud, is abhorred by the Utopians."

† These anecdotes are extracted from a manuscript Life of More, written by one of his relatives: it is in Lambeth Library.

More's most able work against Tyndale, was the first which he wrote, called A Dialogue. It represents that a nobleman sent his friend to Sir Thomas More, requesting assistance to counteract opinions which were gaining great ascendancy in the country against the Romish church. These were "of pylgrymagys—ymages—prayer to saints—myracles—tradicions—infallibility—cruelty to hereticks—burning the New Testament—and prohibiting books, called Lutheran." It is evident that all these topics were shrewdly controverted throughout the kingdom. The spirit of inquiry was gone forth, and was working out the great reformation in spite of every obstacle. The most important of these subjects, is the burning of the New Testament; an atrocious deed, to defend which this dialogue was written. He thus introduces the prevailing opinions: "The people say that all this gere is done but onely to stoppe menes mouthes, and to put euery man to sylence that wolde any thyng speke of the fautes of the clargye. And they thynke that for none other cause was also burned at Poules crosse the new Testament late translated in englysshe by mayster Wyllyam Huchyn, otherwyse called Mayster Tyndall, who was (as men say) well knowen or he wente ouer the see, for a man of ryght good lyuyng, studyous and well lerned in scrypture, and in dyuers places in England was very well lyked, and dyd gret good with prechyng. And men mutter amonge themselfe that the boke was not onely fautles, but also very well translated, and was deuysed to be burned, bycause men sholde not be able to prove that suche fautes (as were at Poules crosse declared to haue bene founde in it) were neuer founde there in dede, but vntruely surmysed. And yet suche as they were, some men saye, were noo fautes at all, yf they hadde be so translated in dede, but blame layed and faute founde with thynges nothyng faute worthy, onely to deface that holy worke, to the ende that they myghte seme to haue some iuste cause to burne it. ¶ And that for none other entente, but for to kepe out of the people's handes all knowleges of Crystys gossell, and of goddys lawe, excepte soo moche onely as the clergye theymselve lyste nowe and than to tell vs. And that lytell as it is and seldom shewed, yet as it is fered not well

and truely tolde, but watered with false gloses, and altered from the trouthe of the very wordes and sentence of scripture only for y<sup>e</sup> mayntenaunce of theyr authoryte. ¶ And the fere lest this thyng sholde euydently appere to the people, yf they were suffered to rede the scripture them selfe in theyr own tonge was (as it is thought) the very cause not onely for whiche the newe testament translated by Tyndale was burned, but also that the clargye of this realme hath before this tyme, by a constytucion prouyncyall prohybyted any boke of scripture to be translated into the Englyshe tonge, feryng men with fyer as heretyques who so sholde presume to kepe them, as though it were heresye for a crysten man to rede crystys gossell.”

These admissions are deeply interesting : they show that the laity throughout the kingdom were strongly excited. The picture of public opinion, thus drawn and published, is from the pen of the champion of popery, and, as it tells against his own party, we may naturally conclude that he has not exaggerated. The character of Tyndale, exhibited by his persecutor, is as highly honourable as it is faithful. In the third book of the Dialogues, More attempts to defend the burning of the New Testament, by declaring that it was full of errors. “ To tell all wold be to reherse the hole boke.” “ To search for one faute would be like studying where to fynde water in the see.” At length his budget of errors is opened, and *three* heresies are proclaimed : “ the prestes of Crystes chyrche he calleth senyours—Chyrche he calleth congregation—and charyte he calleth alway love.” These objections were unworthy the pen of a scholar, and are highly gratifying to the friends of the Reformation. Tyndale’s immortal work was subject to the severest scrutiny of the brightest scholars of the age, men of the keenest penetration, and his most decided enemies : but the pure gold defied their research for alloy ; and, in the absence of serious errors, the critics found unreasonable fault with words, because they would have preferred others nearly similar, (no more diversity of meaning, to use an expression of Coverdale, than between *fourpence* and *a groat*,) if not synonymous. Sir Thomas frequently betrays a degree of blind hostility,

disgraceful as the system in which he had been educated. Tyndale's rule of obedience to the king was: "A crysten man is bounden to obay even tyranny, yf it be not agaynste his fayth, nor the law of god, tyll god delyuer hym therof." In reply to this, More displays a captious littleness, totally opposed to his native genius: he admits that the Apostle expresses exactly the same idea,—"'we muste rather please god than man,' which is well sayed of the apostle, but to be said of Tyndale, a heretic, it is a playne exhortacyon to rebellion."\*

The word *senior* was taken from the vulgate Latin. Tyndale acknowledged that it was not sufficiently explicit, and that he should prefer the word *elder*. This gave so much offence to the punning Lord Chancellor, that he likens it to a man blind of one eye, putting out the other to amend his sight.† The term which gave most offence was "congregation," used instead of church. In using this term, he was justified by his learned sovereign—the defender of the faith—Henry the Eighth, who in a proclamation, and in the six articles penned by his own hand, combines the two words thus—"the congregation of the church of England."‡ Tyndale and the king were right in using the term congregation, because the common acceptation of the word church was neither the building in which worship was conducted, nor the body of christians who worshipped, but it was limited to the clergy, who were called the church.|| It is now very properly altered to church, a term by which we understand all those whose faith and practice constitute them christians.

More also complains, "that at the tyme of this translacyon Hychens (Tyndale) was with Luther in Wyttenberge, and set certayne glosys in the mergent, framed for the settinge forthe of the vngracyous secte."§ He finds fault, that "confession

\* Preface to Confutation.

† Confutation, p. 133.

‡ Autographs in the British Museum.

|| The act of parliament which constituted the king supreme head of the church, was intended solely to bring the clergy, who were called the church, under the jurisdiction of the statute law.

§ This refers to the 4to., a copy of which was found upon the martyr Bilney in 1531, having the prologue to the Romans.

he translateth into knowledgyng—Penaunce into repentaunce;” and he sums up all the errors as springing from this principle: “For he wolde make y<sup>e</sup> people byleue that *we sholde beleue nothyng but playne scripture*, in whyche poynte he techeth a *playne pestylent heresye*”!! The faults are, in his estimation, such that “as it were as sone done to weue a new web of cloth as to sow up euery hole in a net, so were it almost as lytell labour and lesse to translate y<sup>e</sup> hole boke all newe then attempt to correct it.” He admits, however, “that a nother man translatynge the testament, and beyng good and faythfull, myghte haue vsed happily those chaunges wythout euyll meanyng or any suspicion therof.”\* To bring these absurd notions to a climax, he declares, that “yt is enough for good cristen men that know those thynges for heresy, to abhorre and burne vppe his bokes *and the lykers of them with them*”!!! This was the spirit of popery: has it changed? If it has, it was not infallible: if it has not, may such a system never again desolate our happy island!

Sir Thomas not only endeavours to frighten the people from reading Tyndale, by the threat of burning here and hereafter, but, to supply the place of argument, he calls to his aid a ghost to establish his charge of heresy. Unfortunately for him, the poor shade had been so roughly treated on a former attack, that he very prudently refused to venture a second time: “When I desired Origene to take the payne to come and bere wytnesse wyth me in thys mater, he semed at the fyrst very well content. But when I tolde hym that he sholde mete with Tyndale: he blessed hymselfe and shranke bakke, and sayde he had leuer go some other waye many a myle then onys medle wyth hym. For I shall tell you syr, quod he, before thys tyme a ryght honorable man very connyng and yet more vertuouse, the good bysshoppe of Rochester, in a great audyence brought me in for a wytne agaynst Luther and Tyndale, euyn in this same mater, aboute the tyme of the burnynge of Tyndalys euyll translated testament. But Tyndale, as soon as he herd of my name, without any respecte of

\* Confutation, p. 96.

honestye, fell in a rage wyth me, and all to rated me, and called me starke heretyke, and that the starkest that euer was. Thys tale Orygene tolde me, and swore by saynt Symkyn that he was neuer so sayed vnto of suche a lewde felowe synnys he was fyrste borne of hys mother, and therfore he wolde neuer medle wyth Tyndale more. Now, indede, to saye the treuth, yt were not well done of Tyndale to leue resonyng and fall a scoldyng, chydynge, and brawlyng, as yt were a bawdy begger of Byllyter-lane. Fy for shame, he sholde fauored and forborne hym somewhat, and yt had bene but for his age. For Origene is nowe xiiij. hundred yere olde or there aboute, and this was not mych aboute vij. yeres synnys.”\* This story, told on the credibility of the Lord Chancellor of England, must have produced its effect on the populace, to whom it would be rehearsed by the priests with all gravity as words of truth and soberness.

It is amusing to hear Tyndale accused of calling hard names, by one who was a perfect master of the art of abuse. An intelligent papist who, in 1533, published that rare volume, “Salem and Bizance,” complains very seriously that More calleth those with whom he differed “sometyme desperate wretches, sometyme sterke heretykes, and other whyles he calleth them the blessed brotherhode, or the newe broched bretherne, or the euangelical bretherne, and the principal doers he calleth potheded postels, naughtee bretherne or heretike brethern—these be strange names deuised after a merueilous railing fashion, wherein I thinke verely he dothe not as he wolde be done to.”

Tyndale was, at times, severe in his language, but it was a justifiable and even needful severity; thus, referring to unmeaning ceremonies, he says, “a man will as soon gape while thou putttest sand as holy salt in his mouth, yf thou shew hym no reason therof, he had as leyffe be smered wyth vnhalowed butter as anoynted with† charmed oyle, yf his soule be not taught to vnderstande somewhat therby.” This was a poser to Sir Thomas, whose anger dictated his reply: “Ah blasphemouse beste, to

\* Confutation, p. 104.

† More misquotes it “vncharmed.”

whose rorynge and lowynge no good crysten man can with out heuynes of herte gyue ere. Now foloweth yt also that yf the sacrament were as good vnmynistred as mynistred to who so euer is not taught the proper signyfycacyons of the outwarde token in the sacrament, as Tyndale here vnder a blasphemous iestyngge fasshyon telleth vs: then foloweth yt, I saye, that there was neuer chylde crystened synnys crystendome fyrst begane, but that yt hadde bene as good to haue lefte it vncrystened, and neuer to haue let water touche yt, bycause yt coude not be taught what the water signified.”\* This must have been a grave subject to those who considered that the neglect of parents as to this ceremony would be visited upon the soul of the child in eternal misery!!

More was exceedingly desirous that the people should not read or examine the works of Tyndale: his great forte was ridicule and angry abuse, but he sometimes resorts to persuasion. “I wolde aduise any man neither to rede these heretykes bokes nor mine, but occupy theyr myndes better, and standynge fermely by the catholyke faith of this .xv. C. yere, neuer onys muse vppon these newe fangled heresydes; but if at the parell of daynger to burne both here and in hell, he cannot hold his yechynge fyngers frome theyre poysened bokes, then wold I counsaile hym in any wyse to rede therwith such thynges as are wrytten agaynst theym.” “Besyde the bookes of Latyn, French, and Douch an innumerable sorte. There are made in the Englysshe tonge. Fyrst, Tyndales new testament, father of them all, by reason of hys false translatyng.” “Tyndales heresies farre exceed and passe: and incomparably offende the maieste of our Lorde God, than all the settinge vppe of Bell, and Baal, and Belzabub, and all the deuyls in hell.” More, as keeper of the king’s conscience, seriously said, “That the king would lose his own soul if he suffered Tyndale’s Testament in his people’s hands.”† The violence of this language shows the weakness of his cause, and the poverty of his argument in attempting to defend the Romish church. It is in

\* Confutation, folio 36.

† Preface to the Confutation.



delightful contrast with the opinion formed by a modern papist, justly esteemed for his liberality and candour, and eminent as a profound scholar. "With respect to Tyndale's translation, it is astonishing how little obsolete the language of it is, even at this day; and, in point of perspicuity and noble simplicity, propriety of idiom and purity of style, no English version has yet surpassed it. The criticisms of those who wrote against it (we are sorry to find Sir Thomas More among them) are generally too severe, often captious, and sometimes evidently unjust." He adds: "Burning suspicious books is the readiest way to multiply them: as persecuting for religion is the surest mean of propagating it."\*

\* Dr. Geddes' *Prospectus to a New Translation*, p. 89.

## CHAPTER VI.

————— “he had a golden mind  
 That would not bend to dross, but still aspire  
 To heaven, and faith gave wings to his desire ;  
 He was belov'd of all that lov'd God's name.  
 The trumpet of his voice would still proclaim  
 The word of God.” —————

TYNDALE'S ACCOUNT OF HIS TRANSLATION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT—  
 HIS MOTIVES AND PURITY OF INTENTION—HE PUBLISHES MANY  
 WORKS.

IN vindication of the motives which induced Tyndale to undertake this dangerous and arduous labour, of translating the Holy Scriptures, his learned and admirable colleague, John Fryth, a short time before his martyrdom, thus addressed Sir Thomas More :—“ And Tyndale I truste lyueth ; well contente with suche pore apostles lyfe, as God gaue hys sonne Christ, and hys faythfull mynysters in thys worlde, whych is not sure of so many mytes, as you be yearely of many poundes, although I am sure that for hys learnynge and iudgement in scripture, he were more worthye to be promoted then all the byshoppes in Englande. I receyued a letter from hym, whych was wrytten sens Christmas, wherin amonge other matters he wryteth thus : I call God to recorde agaynst the daye we shall appeare before oure Lorde Jesus Christ to geue rekonyng of oure doinges, that I neuer altered one syllable of Godes worde agaynst my consyence, nor wolde do thys daye, yf all that is in earthe, whether it be honoure, pleasure, or ryches myght be geuen me.” Fryth adds, “ Judge, good Christen reader, whether these words be not spoken of a

faythfull, clere, and innocent herte. And as for hys behauyore is suche, that I am sure no man can reprove hym of any synne, howbeit no man is innocent before God whych beholdeth the herte."

His motives are thus declared in the prologue prefixed to the 4to. Testament with glosses, 1526. "I haue here translated (brethren and susters, moost dere and tenderly beloued in Christ) the Newe Testament for youre spirituall edyfyng, consolacion, and solas: the causes that moved me to translate, y thought better that other shulde ymagion, then that y shulde rehearse them. Moreover y supposed yt superfluous, for who ys so blynde to axe why lyght shulde be shewed to them that walke in dercknes, where they cannot but stomble, and where to stomble ys the daunger of eternall damnacion, other so despyghtfull that he wolde enuye eny man (y speake nott his brother) so necessary a thinge, or so bedlem madde to affyrme that good is the naturall cause of yuell, and derknes to procede oute of lyght, and that lyinge shulde be grounded in trougth and verytie and nott rather clene contrary, that lyght destroyeth dercknes, and veritie reproveth all manner lyinge."

In 1528, Tyndale published the most valuable of his own compositions, *The Obedience of a Christian Man*. In the preface, he, at considerable length, proves the necessity of a free circulation of the Scriptures in the vernacular language of every country. After his christian salutations, he says: "Let it not make thee dispayre, neither yet discourage thee (oh reader) that it is forbidden thee in payne of lyfe and goodes, or that it is made breakynge of the kynges peace, or treason vnto his highnes, to reade y<sup>e</sup> worde of thy soules health. But muche rather be bolde in the lorde and comfort thy soule. For as much as thou art sure and haste an euydent token thorow suche persecutyon, that it is the true worde of God, whiche worde is euer hated of the worlde." He argues, that as the Jews, and those to whom the scriptures were immediately delivered, had them in their own tongue, so ought all mankind. That Jerome felt the great importance of a vernacular translation, and with much labour made one in Latin. That since the scriptures have been shut up, gross darkness has covered

the people. “The curates, alas, themselves, for the moost part, wotte no more what the Newe or Olde Testament meaneth, than do the Turkes.”—“Moreouer seynge that one of you euer preacheth contrary to a nother. And whan two of you mete, the one disputeth and brauleth with the other, as it were two scoldes. And for as moche as one holdeth this doctor, and another that, one foloweth Duns,\* and another S. Thomas,” &c., enumerating fifteen different sects in the then Roman Catholic church in England, he adds, “In so great dyuersyte of spyrites howe shal I knowe who lyeth and who sayeth trueth: wherby shall I trye them and iudge them? Verely by Goddes worde, whiche onely is true. But howe shall I that do, whan thou wylte not let me se the scrypture?”

Tyndale speaks familiarly of the original languages: “The Greke tongue agreeth more with the Englyshe than with the Latyne, and the properties of the Hebrue tongue agreeth a thousande tymes more with y<sup>e</sup> Englysshe than with the Latyne.” He winds up this interesting preface with a serious charge. “Fynally that the threatenynge and forbyddynge the laye people to rede the scrypture is not for loue of your soules (whiche they care for as the foxe doeth for the gese) is euydent and clerer than the sonne, in as moche as they permytte and suffre you to reade Robyn Hode, and Beuys of Hampton, Hercules, Hector and Troylus, with a thousande hystories and fables of loue and wantones, and of rybaudrye, as fylthy as herte can thynke, to corrupte the myndes of youth with all, clene contrary to the doctryne of Chryst and of his apostles.”

This book fell into the king’s hands through the zeal of Tyndale’s enemies to prevent his seeing it. Queen Anne Boleyn had lent her copy to one of the ladies in waiting, who had formed an attachment to a handsome page, named Zouch; he playfully seized the book, and made his escape with it to the chapel, as a

\* Duns Scotus, a celebrated monk, born in Scotland, of whom Camden gives the following character, as drawn by an Italian poet:

“All learning taught in humaine bookes and couched in holy writ,  
Dun Scotus darke and doubtfull made by subtilty of wit.”

secure place for private reading; but unfortunately Dr. Sampson caught him before he could conceal the proscribed treasure, and with severe threats took away the book, and gave it to Cardinal Wolsey. When the queen asked for her book, the lady, falling on her knees, told her what had happened: the amiable queen raised her with kindness, saying, it shall be the dearest book the cardinal has got. She went to the king, and told him the conduct of the doctor and cardinal. Henry immediately called for the stolen volume, when she with irresistible tenderness besought the king to examine its contents, which he did, and appeared to be delighted with it, saying, "This book is for me and all kings to read."

During this time Tyndale was incessantly employed, and published a number of tracts and books, which, though small in size, were mighty in pulling down the strongholds of superstition in England. The original editions of many of these tracts are in my cabinet, and have afforded me much instruction and information, as well as amusement: among them is a copy of *The Obedience of a Christen Man*, small 4to. published May, 1528, once the property of the princess, afterwards Queen Elizabeth. It has her autograph beautifully written, but with all the pomp worthy of a Tudor: "Elizabeth, daughter of England and France." This book, probably, assisted to fix her principles in favour of the Reformation.

In 1529, having finished his translation of the first books of the Old Testament, Tyndale commenced the publication of them in separate tracts, ornamented with wood-cuts, and accompanied with notes, which gave great offence to the clergy. When the manuscript of the book of Deuteronomy was ready for the press, thus completing the Pentateuch, he was visited, by the inscrutable dispensation of Divine Providence, with a heavy calamity. Minding to print the fifth book of Moses at Hamburgh, he on his way thither suffered shipwreck on the coast of Holland; and lost his books, money, and manuscript; his life was saved, for in the goodness of God he was not wrecked on the English coast, where, if the sea had

spared him, a Smithfield fire would have burnt him. He continued his journey, and being joyned by Coverdale, they again translated the book of Deuteronomy, and, assisted by a pious lady, Mrs. Van Emmerson, it got printed; he thus completed the first portion of the Old Testament in 1530. At Hamburgh, the same providence which had preserved him in shipwreck, armed his body against the pestilence. "They went through the work in safety, while the sweating sickness swept away thousands in the city with a general mortality; as if the useful sweating of their brains were a preservative against the hurtful sweating of their bodies. And indeed close application to a lawfull calling, is the best antidote against a public infection."\* This is the only portion of the Old or New Testament in the translation of which Tyndale and Coverdale assisted each other.

In the preface to Genesis, he observes, that when he published the New Testament, he desired them that were learned to amend, if ought were found amiss, but that, instead of amending it, the papists have raised an outcry against the translation; saying there were many thousand heresies in it, so that it could not be mended: even if an i lacked a tittle over his head, it was noted to the ignorant people for an heresy. "A thousand books had they lever to be put forth against their abominable doings and doctrine, than that the scripture should come to light." "Which thing only moved me to translate the New Testament. Because I had perceived by experience how that it was impossible to establish the lay people in any truth, except the scripture was plainly laid before their eyes in their mother tongue." He humbly submits his Pentateuch to the judgment of Hebrew scholars, and expresses his willingness to have it burnt, if they will first put forth another, that shall be found more correct. His writings had by this time been extensively circulated, and began to produce their good fruit sixty or an hundred fold.

Many of these tracts are now lost, and probably may never be again recovered. The great object which he endeavours to illus-

trate through all his works is the important difference between the Old and the New Testaments or Covenants. No man of that age, nor perhaps from that to the present period, had more distinct and pure sentiments upon this very important subject. The former dispensation, pointing by signs and ceremonies to the latter, in which a spiritual but sublime simplicity of worship takes the place of outward pomp and splendour. He was severe on those ceremonies, the inventions of men, alike at variance with revelation and reason, by which all religion was made to consist in bodily motions—howling—pattering—creeping—crossing, &c. &c. His great object was to place the soul before its Creator to worship him in spirit and in truth—well knowing that the result of such intercourse must be a blameless and useful life of active benevolence. He advocated the simple ceremonial institutes of the New Testament, as calculated richly to promote the great object of spiritual worship. Deeply impressed with the importance of religious principles—he gave up none of his preconceived opinions until satisfied by divine truth that they were wrong. His was the gradual emancipation of a spirit determined, fearless of all consequences, to try all things, and hold fast that which proved good. This is the great principle of the Reformation. This is the leading truth of revelation—a principle which, while it establishes the right of private judgment, also imbues the mind with a sense of individual responsibility at the day of judgment.

While many men, of distinguished talent and piety, have advocated the imposition of ceremonies, creeds, and confessions, they appear to others fraught with unmingled evil; their effects are intolerance, bigotry, and persecution to those who cannot conscientiously conform, and hypocrisy in those who subscribe them merely for place or lucre.

## CHAPTER VII.

“Rome tam’d the world, the Pope tam’d Rome so great;  
 Rome rul’d by power, the Pope by deep deceit.  
 But, how more large, than theirs, was Tyndale’s fame,  
 Who, with his pen, both Pope and Rome doth tame?”

FR. QUARLES.

TYNDALE’S WORKS GIVE GREAT OFFENCE—SECRETLY CIRCULATED—  
 POPE’S BULL AGAINST THEM—EFFORTS OF HENRY TO SUPPRESS AND  
 DESTROY THEM.

TYNDALE’S writings were obnoxious to the popish clergy, because he attacked and demolished that stronghold of popery,—a pretended authority of the Church, on the plea of immediate and continued descent from the apostles, and their claim of being the depositary of traditions, alleged to be of equal authority with the scriptures, as the rule of faith. Tyndale, in the *Practice of Prelates*, proves that this plea has no foundation;—that it was many hundred years after Christianity was founded, and had extended her genial influence, before the papists were conceived; and that it was the work of several centuries to strengthen and prepare that baneful system for the desolation of Europe which it occasioned, not only by crusades and the horrors of war, but by that dismal prostration of intellect to what was called holy church and her dogmas. If inquiry was ventured upon, it was silenced with this *reason* of faith—so the church believes, and because she believes that the fathers believed it, you must therefore believe it, or be deemed a heretic and suffer death. This mode of argument is seriously commended for its efficacy in driving away the fiend. “This is the faith of that cooliar: which being at point of deathe, and tempted of the deuill what his faith



was, answered, I beleue and die in the faith of Christes church. Being againe demaunded what the faith of Christ his church was, that faith, saied he, that I beleue in. Thus the deuil getting no other awnswer of the simple man, was ouercomed and put to flight.”\* The same learned doctor assigns as his reason for not allowing a translation of scripture: “For precious stones ought not to be cast before hogges, and such of all likelihod are the laye ignorant people.” An odd idea of the priest, for the *natural* result must be, his christening the little pigs, and celebrating the mass to the larger swine.

Such was the system in which Tyndale had been educated. The light of Scripture had gradually dispersed the gross darkness which had overshadowed his own mind, and he was animated with an earnest desire that the same light should shine upon his native country. The great object of his writings was to excite honest, rational inquiry, guided by the Bible. At times he indulged in justifiable raillery. He thus ridicules abstinence: “A Charter House monk would rather dye than eat flesh, but he loves the strongest ale or beer heated with spices, and pours it in without measure.” In the observance of holy days “will he kepe so straight, that if he meete a flee in his bed he dare not kill her,” but he neither knows nor cares why the day is kept. In the multitude of ceremonies he is always in fear; for if without a stole about his neck he were to say mass, the wafer would not be consecrated; if he gave absolution, it were not worth a mite: so their praying to posts, domme pateryng and howlyng; domme straunge holy gestures; these all mark a fleshlie spiritualitie, which for eight hundred years has been established with lies.”†

When he had accomplished his most important object in printing the New Testament, very great difficulties were encountered in circulating volumes prohibited by such severe pains and penalties; but the determined spirit of the reformers overcame them all. Sir T. More complains of the numbers imported. “Whych bokes all be yt that they neyther can be there printed without great coste, nor

\* Staphilus' Apologie, translated by Stapleton, 4to. 1565, pp. 53 and 64.

† Reply to Sir Tho. More, Preface.

here solde wythout great aduenture and parell; yet ceace they not with mony sent from hense, to prente them there and send them hyther by y<sup>e</sup> whole fattes full at once, and in some places lokynge for noo lucre, caste them abrode by nyght." Constantine, when in prison, contrived by giving up some of the books to relax the vigilance of his persecutors, and made his escape. "He deuysed how those deuylysshe bokes whyche hymself and hys felowes hadde brought and shyped, myghte come to the byshoppes handes to be burned. And therfore he shewed me the shypmannes name that had them, and the merkes of the ferdellys, by which I haue sinnys hys escape receyued them."\* Information was laid against R. Webbe of Bristol, "that some of these pestylent bookes were throwen in the strete and lefte at mennys dores by nyght, that where they durste not offer theyr poyson to sell, they wolde of theyr cheryte poyson men for nought."†

John Fox, the martyrologist, observes, that "the bookes of W. Tindal being compiled, published, and sent to England, it cannot be spoken what a doore of light they opened to the eyes of the whole English nation, which before were many yeares shut vp in darkenesse." The effect they produced, shook the pope, and alarmed the king and his council. The kind permission of the Bishop of London opened to me the archives of his diocese during these troublous times, and to my great surprise I found, that the fame of Tyndale had reached Rome probably before it was known to Henry the Eighth. The thunders of the Vatican were launched against him so early as 1520. In the records of Bishop Tonsall is preserved a bull dated July 17, in the eighth year of the pontificate of Leo, on seven closely-written folios, against Luther and his sect. At the end of this formidable instrument, which denounces torment here and eternal fire hereafter against those dread heretics, is a list of their names in the following order:—Luthero, Lambertus, Pomeranus, Zuynglius, Œcolampadius, Bucerus, Melanthonus, Carolastadius, Brentius, Jonas, Westemerus, Hedendorphius, Johnes Agricola, Vrbanus Regius, Brestemanning, Andreas Knopken, Si-

\* More's Confutation, Preface, pt. 1.

† Confutation, pt. 2, p. 408.

mon Hesus, Johnes Wyltkyrk, Otton Brymsellius, Willmus Tyndall, Willmus Roy apostata, Ricus Bryghtwell. The three last names are linked together with a note on the right hand, *Angli*; and on the left, *Ordines frm minor de obsuacia de Grenewyche*. All these are names worthy of our grateful remembrance: of the Englishmen, Tyndale justly takes the lead. More calls him "this blessed apostle of these apostates."\* In these records is also preserved a proclamation issued in the 21st of Henry VIII. (1529,) declaring the royal determination to execute with rigour all the laws against hereticks. It sets forth, "that books in English and Latin have been circulated throughout the kingdom replete with most venomous heresies, blasphemies and slaunders intollerable to the clene eares of any good christen man;" and the king commands all his lords, spiritual and temporal, judges, justices of the peace, sheriffs, maiores, bayliffes, constables, and other his officers and ministers, and all his subjects, to prevent any person from preaching or teaching without license, and to cause all such books to be brought in, on pain of immediate imprisonment and punishment for heresy. The proclamation finishes with a list of about ninety Latin and eighteen English books, first the Newe Testament, followed by eleven other books written by Tyndale.

In the library at Lambeth Palace is an original state document (a copy is in the records of the venerable Warham,) which very strikingly exhibits the extraordinary effect that the writings of Tyndale had upon the imperious Henry and his clergy. The New Testament in English, and a few little books published by a pious preacher in exile, disquieted the mighty monarch of a great nation, and deeply excited his nobles. Although the effect they produced was not so sudden, yet it appears to have been as deep and alarming as the hand-writing upon the wall was to Belteshazzar and his courtiers. The martyrologist Fox, who was an eye-witness of these scenes, declares that Tyndale's books produced such singular profit to the godly, and envy to the ungodly, that the commotion to destroy them was "like as, at the birth of

\* Confutation of Tyndale, Vol. II. p. 364.

Christ, Herod and all Jerusalem was troubled with him.” Henry had abolished the Pope’s jurisdiction in England, but he still cherished popery as the best means of preserving arbitrary power. The circulation of the Scriptures, he saw would be the forerunner of the downfall of the popish church in England. That system, weighed in the balances of God’s word, was found wanting; and if the fundamental principle of the Romish church, *belief without investigation*, gave place to honest inquiry, Henry might justly conclude, that the people, emancipated from religious slavery, would with injurious haste shake off their political chains. He therefore exerted all the energies of his powerful mind to extirpate books so much at variance with cruel or unjust laws and arbitrary domination.

The document which suggested these observations, occupies eight skins of parchment, closely written on both sides in a very neat and small character, dated May 28, 1530. It was published in presence of the king, his council, and a convocation of clergy, at the palace of Westminster, adjoining to the chamber of the parliament, and witnessed with the attestations and seals of the three parliamentary notaries: these imposing solemnities are directed against the writings of William Tyndale!

The document commences with a solemn appeal to God, and “to all trew and faithful cristen people;” and it then sets forth, that the King, “hearing that many books in the English tonge containing many detestable errors and dampnable opynyons, prynted in parties beyonde the see, to be brought into diuerse townes and sondrie parties of this his realme of Englande, and sawen abroad in the same, to the great decaye of our faithe and perylous corrupcion of his people, vnles spedye remedye were breuelie prouided. That his subiectes myght kepe pure and clene of all contagion of wronge opynion in Cristes religion, and that he was full lothe to suffre suche euill sede sown amongst his people, soo to take roote, that it myght ouergrowe the corne of the Catholicke fayth.” It goes on to state, that his majesty, having collected those books, sent them to his council, prelates, and divers learned men of both universities and others, with instructions that

they should read them, and be prepared conscientiously to give their opinions as to the doctrines contained in them, and to be ready to support such opinions by extracts from the said books;—that this council met at the king's palace at Westminster, consisting of the lord legate, archbishops, bishops, and learned men; and that they came to an unanimous conclusion, that all the said books contain “many erroures and heresydes both detestable and damnable”—“which bookes doo swarme full of heresies and detestable opynyons.” Each heresy is then engrossed at length on the deed. As our limits will not allow of the insertion of the whole, we have selected the first which is written against each book, and given the total number.

THE WICKED MAMMON contains thirty heresies—1st. Faith only doth justify us. THE OBEDIENCE OF A CHRISTIAN MAN, twenty-five heresies—Whatsoever is done before the Spirit of God giveth light is condemnable—Purgatory ys of the popys inuentyon, and therfore he may doo ther what so euer he wyll—No man may be hired to pray. THE REVELATION OF ANTICHRIST, forty-nine heresies—To bynde a man perpetually to any vow of religion is without doubt an error—Not only the Pope ys wycked, but the popedom-self, and the offyce ys yniquyte, and ys suche a power that yt suppressyth the faythe and gosple, and cannot be admynystered by a good prynce, but by the aduersarye of Chryste\*—All thinges necessarye are declared in the Newe Testament—The Newe Testament of Criste will not suffre any lawe of compulsion, but oonly of counsell and exhortation. [These noble sentiments are declared by the Roman Catholic church to be detestable and dampnable heresies!!!] THE SUM OF SCRIPTURE, ninety-two heresies—The wáter of the fonte hath noo more vertue in it than hath the water of a ryuer—We be all equally bounde to knowe the Gospells and the Epistells of Sainte Powle—Men should see that their childern come to church to here sermon—

\* In the original document, this heresy is obliterated; I have copied it by the aid of the transcript in the records. That which was heresy in 1530, and punishable with a cruel death, *viz.* to speak against the pope, was declared by act of parliament in 1534 to be sound doctrine. Heresy is a strange thing.

The Gospell is written for all persons, estates, dukes, princes, pope, emperour.” THE BOOK OF BEGGARS—That there is noo purgatory, but it is a thinge invented by the covetousness of the spiritualtee oonly, to translate all kingdoms from other princes unto them—And that there is not oon worde spoken of it in all Holye Scripture. THE EXPOSITION into the seventh chapitre of the First Epistill to the Corynthians, contains these heresies—Vows of chastity may be broken—Fasting not an exclusion of meat and drink—that Paul had a wife—that Sainte Pawle saith, that he ought to be chosen for to be a bishop, that is the husbände of oon wyfe.” In this it is difficult to discover which this learned council of the Romish church charged with heresy, Paul or Tyndale. The deed goes on to say, “ All which great errors and pestilent heresies being contagious and dampnable with all, the bokes conteyning the same, with the translacion also of Scripture, corrupted by William Tyndall, as well in the Olde Testament as in the Newe, the kinges hyghnes, with the assent of the prelates and universities, has detyrmined vtterlye to be expelled, rejected, and putt away out of the handes of his people. And the king orders all preachours in his realme to publish the commands of his highness in a bill to be read in every church and chapel in the kingdom, during divine service. This bill sets forth the king’s zeal for his people’s happiness, and that, having found that certain books were distributed through the realme, he had collected them, and had required the opinion of his prelates and learned men, to know whether they were agreable to Goddis woorkes and doctryne or noo;—that, after free deliberation, the whole of these lerned men had determined that these books conteyne fals tradicions, and corrupte doctrine, and pernicious heresies, to the destruction of the soules of good cristen men.—I therfore warne and monyshe you by the woordes of Cryste, Take hede of fals prophettes. Wherefore yowe that have the bookes called Thobedience of a Crysten Man—The Sum of Scripture—The Reuelation of Anticrist—The Supplication of Beggars—Mammona—The Matrymony of Tyndale—The Newe Testament in Englishe, of the translacion whiche is nowe prynted, detest them ; abhorre them ;

kepe them not in your handes ; deliuer them to the superiours *suche as call for them*. And if by reading of them heretofore, any thinge remanyth in your breests of that teching, either *forget it*, or by enformacion of the truthe, expelle it and purge hit to the entent that ye soo puryfyed and clensed of that contagious doctryne and pestiferous tradicions, may be fytte and apte to receyve and reteyne the true doctryne and vnderstanding of Cristes lawes, to the comforte and edificacion of your soules. Thus I move and exhorte you in God to do. This is your duty to do. This ye ought to doo. And being obstinate and denyinge or refusing this to doo, the prelates of the churche having the cure and charge of your soules, owght to compell you, and your prince to punysh you and correct you not doing. Vnto whom, as Saint Powle saith, the sworde is given by Goddes ordinance for that purpose. It is added, that an opinion having been spread abroad, that the king was bound to give the Scriptures to his people in their own language, he had taken the advice of these prelates and nobles, who declare that he is not bound to do so; but that he will have the New Testament translated, and if the people are meke and submissive, and he thinks that it will conduce to their good, he will give it to them.

This decree was calculated to serve as a general search-warrant to examine every man's house for the forbidden books, from the palace to the hovel. Where discovered, the penalty was awfully severe: as in the case of Harding, a tormenting death too often aggravated by refined cruelty. It is surprising that any of these books have been handed down to us. Most of them still exist, and mocking the impotent power which sought their destruction, they form an imperishable monument to the talent and piety of the truly illustrious Tyndale : while they form an equally striking monument to the infamy and disgrace of those who sought to destroy works replete with exalted sentiments, because they promoted emancipation from a system the essence of which is spiritual slavery.

It is a matter of regret, to find among the names appended to the deed, as members of this council, one who afterwards suffered martyrdom for the very cause which he here

condemns. HUGH LATIMER then consented to the destruction of Tyndale, as Saul did to the martyrdom of the amiable and pious Stephen. Sir Thomas More was a principal actor in this business; and he thus describes the solemnities with which this deed received the royal assent :\*—" In hys owne moste roiall person, in the sterre chamber, moste eloquently by hys owne mouth, in greate presence of hys lordes spyrytuall and temporall, gave monycyon and warnynge to all the iustices of peace, of euery quarter of hys realme then assembled byfore hys hyghnes, to be by them in theyr cuntrees to all hys people declared, and dyd prohybyte and forbydde, vppon greate paynes, the bryngynge in, redynge, and kepyng of any of those pernycyouse poysened bookes, to the entent that euery subyet of hys, by the meane of suche manyfolde effectual warnynge, wyth hys gracyouse remys-syon of theyr former offence in hys commaundement before broken, sholde from thense forthe auoyde and estyew the parell and daunger of punyshement, and not dreue hys hyghnesse of necessitye to the thyng from whyche the myldenesse of hys benygne† nature abhorreth."

In June, 1530, the King issued a proclamation, setting forth, that, with the advice of the primates and learned men from all parts of the kingdom, the books of Tyndale had been examined, and found to contain pestiferous errors and blasphemies, and ordaining that they should be taken of all men for books of heresie, and worthy to be put in perpetual oblivion. Henry commands his subjects to deliver up all such books within fifteen days. The judges, justices, constables, and all officers are ordered to seize all those who refuse to deliver such books, or are suspected to keep them, and to bring them before the king and his council, that they may be corrected and punished for their contempt, to the *terrible* example of other like transgressors. The proclamation declares, that it is not expedient for the people to have THE SCRIPTURES IN ENGLISH, and decrees that they ARE BOOKS OF HERESIE, and shall be clerely *exterminated and exiled out of this realme of England*

\* Preface to the Confutation of Tyndale.

† Sir Thomas More, within three years, bitterly tasted the mildness of his royal master's benign nature, by being cruelly put to death!



*for ever.* It also extends the prohibition to the same books in “Douch” (German) and French. This proceeding justifies the character given of his persecutors by Tyndale: he calls them “fleshly-minded hypocrites, as making the Scripture theire own possession and merchandize, and so shutting up the kingdom of heaven, which is God’s word, neither entering themselves, nor suffering them that would.”\*

Every effort of human wit, in addition to such cruel laws, was exhausted against these books. The usual intimidation was the fear of burning, both here and hereafter. More indulged his readers with a peep into the regions of terror, to frighten the poor Papists from inquiries after truth. “Tewkesbury would not have been martyred yf Tyndales vngracyouse bokes had neuer come in hys hande, for whych the pore wreche lyeth now in hell, and cryeth out on him; and Tyndall, yf he do not amende in tyme, he is lyke to fynde hym when they come togither, an hote fyrebronde burnynge at hys bakke, that all the water in the worlde wyll neuer be able to quench.† Then haue we Jonas made out by Tyndale, a boke that whoso delyte therein, shall stande in parell that Jonas was neuer so swallowed vppe wyth the whale, as by the delyte of that booke a mannes soule maye be so swallowed vppe by the deuyll, that he shall neuer haue the grace to gete out agayne.”‡

This prologue is of considerable length, and is ironically severe, by showing the wicked conduct of the Jewish priests in our Lord’s days, and the parallel conduct of the Roman Catholic teachers. It contains a clear exhibition of Tyndale’s religious sentiments. “If thou find ought amisse, when thou seist thy selfe in the glasse of God’s Worde, thynke it compendious wisdom, to amende the same betymes, monished and warned by the ensample of other men, rather than to tary vntil thou be beaten also.” He calls the whale’s belly a new schole in which Jonas lost much of his dross—and exhibits him as a warning. “And wyth Jonas let them that wayte on vanities, and seke God here

\* Prologue to Jonas.

† Preface to the Confutation of Tyndale.

‡ This treatise is published in every edition of Tyndale’s Bible. The original edition is of extreme rarity.

and there, and in euery templ, saue in theyr hertes;—go and seke the testament of God in thyne hart ”—“ and when the rage of thy conscience is ceased, offer thanksgeuing and paye the vowe of thy baptisme, that God only saueth of his only mercy—ascribe the cause of thy tribulacion vnto thyne owne synne, and the cause of thy delyuerance vnto the mercye of God.”

The Lord Chancellor takes advantage also of the superstitious fears of the ignorant. It happened that at this period the country suffered under a severe famine, attended by great mortality. This the *enlightened* More attributes to Tyndale's heretical books; and he predicts that for this heresy the Almighty would send wars, sickness, and mortality.\*

At other times, ridicule and raillery are tried, to aid the support of the tottering hierarchy—“ Neuer was made a more folyshe frantique boke than the Wycked Mammon.” “ Then haue ye an exposycyon also vppon the VII chapyter of Corinthyas, by whyche prestes, freres, monkes, and nonnes be taught that euangelical lyberty, that they may runne out a caterwawynge, and so wow and wedde.” †

Tyndale had now settled at Antwerp, as chaplain to the company of English merchants. Wherever he went, his unaffected piety and amiable manners secured the esteem of all who knew him; and although he sustained a public character, his abode was for some time veiled from his powerful enemies, who had long doomed the persecuted exile to death. He was thus shielded for four years against all their machinations.

During this perilous time he compiled a short treatise on the sacrament, severely condemning the absurdities and idolatry of the mass; but, fearing that it might offend some weak disciples, he withheld it from the press, and it was not printed until after his martyrdom.

With respect to all his tracts and treatises, Fox quaintly but justly says, they are “ no lesse delectable than also most fruitfull to be read.”

\* Preface to the Confutation.

† More indulged in very indelicate jokes upon the vicious conduct and profligate concubinage of the clergy, but their getting married excited his unbounded abhorrence and anger.

## CHAPTER VIII

“ In the rare roll of martyrs we do find  
 Famous John Frith, an Englishman by nature ;  
 Who, from his youth, adorn'd his education  
 With promptitude of wit, and other parts,  
 Whereby he flourish'd both in tongues and arts.”

QUARLES.

INEFFECTUAL ATTEMPTS TO ALLURE TYNDALE TO ENGLAND—HIS  
 SEVERE PRIVATIONS—HENRY'S ANGRY LETTER TO HIS ENVOY—  
 MARTYRDOM OF THE AMIABLE FRITH.

THE emissaries of Henry, Cardinal Wolsey, and the Lord Chancellor, were at this time using their utmost efforts to bring Tyndale to England, that, by cutting short his life, the light of Scripture might be, as they vainly hoped, extinguished. The principal agent employed to effect this, was the British envoy in the Low Countries, Stephen Vaughan. The first communication from him which I have been able to discover, is a letter to his master, Henry VIII., dated January 26, 1530, from the town of Barrough, near Antwerp. From this it appears that Tyndale had not taken up his residence in the Low Countries at that time, so that, to open a correspondence with him, letters were addressed to three different cities in Germany. He was aware of the determined aim of his enemies to destroy him, and, like a hunted hart, concealed himself from his pursuers. The Envoy, having addressed his Majesty on political affairs, thus introduces the subject of our memoir.\* “ I have written three sondry letters vnto Willyam Tyndall, and the same sent for the more suretie to iiii several places; to Frankforde, Hamborough, and Marleborough. I

\* These papers are in the British Museum. I have published every word contained in them relative to Tyndale.

then nott assured in which of the same he was and had veray good hope, after I harde say in Englande that he wolde, upon the promise of your magestie and of your most gracious salue conducte, be content to repayre and cum into England, that I shulde partly therewith, and partly with such other perswasions as I then devised in my said letters, and fynally, with a promyse which I made hym, that whatsoever suretie he wolde reasonably desire for his safe coming in and going out of your Realme, my friends shulde labour to have the same graunted by your magistie. that now the brute and fame of suche thinges (as sithe my wrytyng to hym) hathe chaunced within your Realme, shulde provoke the man not only to be mynded to the contrary of that, whereunto I had thought without difficultie to have easily brought him, but also to suspect my perswasions to be made to his more parell and daungier, then, as I thynke if he were verily perswaded and put before you, your most gracious benygnytie and piteous regarde naturall custome alwayse had towardes your humble subjectes considered, and specially to those, which knowlaging theyr offences, shall humbly requyre your most gracious pardon, he shall never have nede so doe or feare. Lyke as your magestie, as well by his letters written with his owen hande, sent to me for answer of my sayde letters, as also by the copie of another letter of his answering some other person whom your magestie had commanded to perswade by like meanys, may playnly apperceyue—whiche letters like as together I receyued from these parties, so sende I herwith enclosed to your highnes.” This communication was accompanied by a letter to Lord Cromwell, in which he says, “It is vnlikely to gett Tyndall into England when he dayly hereth so many thinges from thense whiche feareth hym. After his booke answering my lord chancillor’s boke be put fourthe, I thinke he wyll wryte no more. THE MAN IS OF A GREATER KNOWLEGE THEN THE KYNGE HIGHNES DOTH TAKE HIM FOR, whiche well appereth by his workes. Wolde god he were in Englande.”

The letters from Tyndale sent to the King by his envoy, have not yet been found. Should they still exist, their contents must be very deeply interesting.

Among the state papers is preserved part of a well written and affecting letter from one of the King's emissaries, who, in a very singular, and even romantic manner, obtained an interview with Tyndale. The courtier found himself most unexpectedly in the presence of his long-sought victim, who awed him with his dignified purity and truth, so that, in answering him, he tells his royal master that he did it as his poor wit would serve him. The letter bears every mark of explicit sincerity, and it displays in lively colours the sufferings of this great man. One to whom the nation is so deeply indebted, was living in painful and perilous concealment, afflicted with hunger, cold, and every privation, aggravated by the difficulties thrown in his way to prevent the circulation of the Scriptures. He deeply partook of the sorrows of David, whose tears flowed because the law of God was despised. Still, the great object for which he cherished life, was not yet accomplished. The Bible had not been printed and circulated in the English language. The king's agent thus writes :—

“ Please it your maiestie to be advertised, how that of late I obteyned a copie of one parte of tyndalles boke, answeyng to the boke put forth by my lord chancellor, whereof immediatly I gave knoledge to my Lord Thomas Cromwell, and him required thereof to advertyse your Highness as aperteyned; which copie beyng rudely writyn enterlyned and difficult to be red, me thowght uncomly and not mete in so vile aray to be sent to the hands of your Riall maieste. The Regard whereof moved me to write it ageyne that it myght come to your most gracious hands the more legible and easy to your redyng, which parte I have herewith sent vnto your hyghnes, thynkyng that the matter therein conteynyed (for the modest order thereof) In regard of his former wrytyng, will somewhat better like you then some other of his works which he hath with lesse advisement, more Rashenses and ruder spirite put forthe before this tyme. this part which your grace receives nowe is but a third or fourth part of his hole worke, but comprehendeth in effect the substance and pithe of the other parts where he par-

ticularly answereth to every chapter of my lordes booke with suche growndes as he hathe laid in his first part, thow he vse in it a larger circumstance. The seconde part I have in likewise obteyned which I will in like wise write and send unto your grace with all convynient spede and celerite. the day before the date\* hereof, I spake with Tyndall without the town of Andwerp and by this meanes. He sent a certeyne person to seke me, whom he had advysed to say, that a certeyne frend of myne, vnknownen to the messenger, was very desirows to speke with me; praying me to take paynes to go unto him to suche place as he should bryng me. Then I to the messenger (said) what is your fryend and where is he? His name I know not, said he, but if it be your pleasure to go where he is, I wilbe glad thider to bryng you: thus dobtfull what this matter ment, I concluded to go with hym, and folowed hym till he browght me without the gate of Andwerp into a feld lying nyghe unto the streame, where was abiding me this said Tyndall. At our metyng, do you not knowe me? said this Tyndall. I do not well remember you, said I to hym; my name, said he, is Tyndall. But Tyndall, said I, fortunate be our metyng. Then Tyndall: Sir, I have bene excedyng desirous to speke with you. And I with you; what is your mynd. Sir, said he, I am enformed that the kynge's grace taketh great displeasure with me for puttyng furthe of certeyne bokes which I lately maid in these partes, but specially for the boke namyd the Practise of Prelates, whereof I have no littell marvaill considering that in it I did but warne his grace of the subtile demeanor of the Clargy of his Realme towards his person, and of the shamefull abusions by them practised, not a littell threatnyng the displeasure of his grace and weale of his Realme. In which doying, I shewed and declared the harte of a trew subiect which sowght the saluegard of his Riall person and weale of his commons, to thentent that his grace thereoff warnyd mygt in dewe tyme prepare his remedies against the subtile dreames. If for my paynes theirin takyn. Yf for my pouertye. Yf for myn exille out of myn

\* The date is unfortunately wanting.

naturall contrey, and beyng absent from my fryndes. Yf for my hongar—my thirst—my cold—the great danger wherewith I am every where compasyd—and fynally yf for innumerable other hard and sharp sicknesses whiche I indure, not yet feellyng theyre asperitie by reson I hopyd with my labors to doo honor to God—trew service to my prynce, and plesure to his commons, how ys yt that his grace this consydering may ether by hymselfe thyncke or by the perswasions of wother, be browght to thyncke, that in this doying I schold not schow a pure mynd, a trew and incorrupt zeale, and effeccyon to his grace. Was there in me any suche mynde when I warnyd hys grace to beware of his cardinall whose iniquyte he schortly after approvyd accordyng to my wrytyng? Doth this deserve hatered? Ageyne, may his grace, beyng a crysten prynce, be so vnkynd to God, whiche hathe commaundyd his word to be spredde thorowgh owght the world; to geve more faythe to the wykkyd perswasions of men, whiche presumyng above Goddes wyssdom and contrary to that whiche Cryst expressly comandeth in his testament dare saye, thatt yt is not lefull for the pepoll to have the same in a tonge that they understond because the puritie thereof schold opyn mens ies to se ther wyckydnes !! Is there more danger in the kynges subjects then in the subjectes of all other princes, whiche in every of there tongges have the same under pryveleage of their sufferaynse, *as I now am, very deth ware more pleasaunt to me then lyffe*, consydering mans nature to be suche as can bear no trewthe. This, after a long communycation had betwene us, for my parte makynge answer as my pore wyt wold serve me whiche war to long to write. I sayde him with gentyll perswasions to know whether he wold come into England aserteynyng hym that meanys schold be made yf he thereto were mynded with owght his parell or dawnger that he myght so doo. And that what surety he wold devyse for the same purpoose, schold by labor of freynds be obteyned of your Magestie: but to this he answerd that he ne wold ne dorste come into England, albeyt your grace wold promes him neversomuch the surtye. “ Feryng lest, as he hath before wryttyn, your promise made scholde schortly be broken by the perswasyon of the clargye

whiche wolde affyrme that promyses made with erytykes ought not to be kept. After this he told me how he had fynysched a worke agenst my Lord Chansellars booke, and wold not put it in printe till suche tyme as your grace had sene yt, becawse he apper-sevyth your dysplesure towards hym for hasty puttyng forthe of his other werkes, and because yt schold appere that he is not of so obstynate mynd as he thynketh he is reported unto your grace. This is the substaunce of his comunycasion had with me, whiche as he spake, I have wryttyn to your grace, word for word, as nye as I cowlde by any possible meanys bryng to remembraunce. My trust, therefore, is that your grace will not but take my laburs in the best part. I thowght necessary to be wrytten unto your grace. After these wordys, he then beyng some thyng fearfull of me, lest I wold have parsuyd hym, and drawyng also towards nyght, he toke his leve of me, and departed from the towne, and I toward the towne, saying I schold schortly peraventure se hym agayne, or yf not, here from hym. Howbeyt, I suppose, he afterward retornyd to the towne by a nother wey, for there is no lyclyhed that he schold lodge without the towne, hastie to parsew hym I was not, becawse I had some lyclyhod to speke schortly agayne with hym, and in perswing hym, I myght perchaunce have fayllyd of my purpose, and put my selfe in dawnger. To declare to your magestie what in my pore judgement I thynke of the man, I asserteyne your grace I have not communed with a man . . . . . The remainder of this interesting paper is lost, but it may be fairly inferred that a high character was given of the distressed exile.

Tyndale's Practice of Prelates, to which he alluded in this conversation with the King's envoy, was printed at Marpurg, by H. Luft in 1530. It is an admirably condensed history of the rise and spread of popery, and of the intriguing practices of the Romish hierarchy. He ascribes the desire of Henry to be divorced from his faithful queen Catherine, to advice instilled into his mind by his confessor, the Bishop of Lincoln, at the instigation of Cardinal Wolsey. The ulterior design was to bring about the marriage of Henry to the French princess; and, by the



united influence of the two crowns, to secure an open road, by which the cardinal might ascend to the papal see and triple crown, in which case Lincoln would have been advanced to York. Tyndale most decidedly opposes the divorce, by learned and unanswerable arguments drawn from the laws of nature and of God. "What God has joined together, no man, not even the Pope, can lawfully put asunder."

Tyndale was contented with his poor apostle's life, although exposed to severe privations; still resisting every temptation to wealth and honour, preferring the wealth of a pure conscience, and the honour of untainted principles, with exile and severe sufferings, to all the pomp and luxuries of affluence, with a guilty conscience. He thus apologizes for presuming to offer his advice to Royalty. "Some man might happlye say, that though a greate man wold be content to haue his deades compared vnto the lawes of God, he wold disdayne yet to have so vyle a wretch as I am, to dispute of them. I answere this is not my faute, but Goddes will, which for the most parte euer chosest of the vilest to confounde the gloriouse which not onlye clothed his sonne with oure vyle nature, but made him also of the lowest sorte of men, euen fyue hundred steppes beneth the degre of a cardinale. And the gloryous scribes and the pharises for all their holinesse rebuked not Herod; but vile Jhon the Baptist."

Another communication relative to this illustrious exile, is contained in a letter from Sir S. Vaughan, addressed to the King, dated May 20, 1531. The sentiments of Tyndale, here communicated to Henry, display great magnanimity; and they are expressed in language which, considering his suffering state, is deeply affecting. The spirit which it breathes reminds us of the devotion of the apostle Paul to his nation, as exhibited in the epistle to the Romans, chapter ix. v. 3. So here, Tyndale was ready to be accursed for his nation, to suffer torment and death, upon condition that his countrymen should be first supplied with the bread of life,—the Bible in their own language. The letter

commences with some political affairs : the following is a copy of the latter part, being all that refers to Frith and Tyndale.

“ As touching a yong man being in these parts, named Frithe, of whome I lately aduertised your magestye by my former lettres, and whom your royall magestie giveth me in commandement with the frendly parswasions admonytions and holsome counsayles to aduertise to leue his willfull opinions and errours and to returne into his natieue contrey. I shall not fayle accordinge vnto your most gracious commaundement to indeavour to thutter most of my power to perswade hym accordinglye, so sone as my chaunce shalbe to mete with hym. How be it I am informed that he very lately maryed in Hollande, and ther dewllethe, but in what place I cannot tell ; thys mariage maye by chaunce hynder my perswasions. I suppose hym to haue byn thereunto dryuen throughe pouuertie, whiche is to be pitied, his qualities considered. I have agayne byn in hande to perswade Tyndall, and to draw hym the rather to favour my perswasions, and not to thinke the same fayned, I shewed hym a clawse conteyned in maister Crumwell's lettre, conteynyng these wordes followinge. And notwithstanding other the premisses in this my lettre conteyned, if it were possible, by good and holsom exhortacions to reconsile and conuerte the sayde Tyndall from the trayne and affection whiche he now is in, and to excerpte, and take away the opynyons and fantasies sorely rooted in hym, I doubte not but the kynge highnes wolde be muche ioyous of his conuersion and amendement. And so beinge conuerted, if then he wolde returne into his realme, vndoubtedly the kinges royall magistie is so inclined to mercie, pitie, and compassion,\* that he refuseth none whiche he seythe to submyt themself to the obedyence and good order of the worlde. In these wordes I thought to be suche swetnes and vertue as were able to perse the hardest harte of the worlde. And as I thought, so it cam to passe. For after sight therof, I perceyued the man to be excedinge altered, and to take the same very nere vnto his

\* These must have been courtly words without meaning, like those at the close of a modern petition—“ as in duty bound will ever pray.”

hearte, in suche wise that water stode in his yees. And answered what gracious wordes are these. I assure youe, sayed he, If it wolde stande withe the kinge most gracious plaisur to graunte only a bare text of the scripture to be put forthe emonge his people, like as is put forthe emonge the subgetes of the emperour in these parties, and of other cristen princes, be it of the translation of what person soever shall please his magestie, I shall ymedyatlye make faithfull promyse neuer to write more, ne abide two dayes in these parties after the same : but ymedyatly to repayre into his realme, and there most humbly submytt myselfe at the fete of his roiall magestie, OFFERYNGE MY BODYE TO SUFFER WHAT PAYNE OR TORTURES, YE WHAT DETHE HIS GRACE WILL, SO THAT THIS BE OBTEYNED. And till that tyme, I will abide thaspect of all chaunces what so euer shall come, and indure my lyfe in as many paynes, as it is able to bere and suffer. And as concernynge my reconsiliacion his grace may be assured that what soeuer I haue sayed or written, in all my life ageynst thonour of Goddes worde, and so proued ; the same shall I before his magestie and all the worlde, vtterly renownce and forsake. And with most humble and meke mynde imbrace the truthe, abhorringe all errour souer at the most gracious and benygne request of his royall magestie, of whose wisdom, prudence and lernynge I hear so greate prayse and commendation, then of any other creature lyuyng. But if those thinges whiche I haue written be true, and stande with Goddes worde, why shulde his magestie hauynge so excellent a guyft of knowlege in the scriptures, moue me to do any thinge agenst my conscience with many other wordes whiche were to longe to write. Fynally, I haue some good hope in the man, and wolde not doubte to bringe hym to some good poynt, were it that some thing now and then myght proceed from your magestie towards me, wherby the man myght take the better comforte of my perswasions. I aduertised the same Tyndall that he shulde not put forthe the same booke, tyll your most gracious pleasure were knowen, whereunto he answered, myne aduertisement cam to late, for he feared lest one that had his copie, wolde put it very shortly in prynte, whiche he

woulde lett yf he coulde, if not there is no remedy. I shall stay it as muche as I can, as yet it is not come forthe ne will not in a while by that I perseyue."

The tears in the eyes of Tyndale showed the excellency of his principles and the goodness of his temper. To him it was a subject of deep regret, that he dared not conform to the wishes of his sovereign and the government of his country. He could submit to privations, cruelty, and death ; but he could not make professions, unless they were sincere. He argues, with sound reason, that the King ought not to require the submission of his subject in matters of religion, contrary to the dictate of conscience, as he hoped, guided by the Scriptures. Here is no boasting of his superior purity or principles, but anxious regret that a profession of insincere conformity was required. It was a painful test, whether he should obey God or man. His fervent piety enabled him to resign himself to every affliction rather than make a hypocritical profession of belief in matters which, in his sober judgment, he considered unscriptural and irrational ; and in this he manifested the most honourable and dignified character which human nature is capable of sustaining.

What little patience Henry possessed, was now exhausted. When he found it impossible to allure, or by any means to get his victim to England, he threw off the mask. With an appearance of indignation he declares, that he will not have the soil of his realm polluted by such a desperate heretic. But his Majesty had also a new and deep cause of alarm and anxiety, lest his envoy should become a reformer instead of reforming the poor exiled priest. A heavenly atmosphere appeared so to surround Tyndale that it was impossible to hold communications with him, and not be convinced of the truth of his piety and principles. The King discovering that he had assigned to his agent a dangerous as well as difficult task, he now resorted to every art of persuasion and threatening, to prevent his ambassador, Sir Thomas Vaughan, from becoming a convert to Tyndale's sentiments.

The reply to Vaughan's letters was drawn by the secretary of state, and laid before the King, who made very considerable

alterations in it: these are accurately copied from the original state paper.\* The words which the royal penman struck out are printed between [ ] in Italics: those in a smaller type interlined were inserted by his hand. They show that Henry possessed a mind of deep penetration, and of very considerable endowments. He made no alterations except where the paper alluded to Tyndale.

“ Stephen Vaughan I commende me vnto you. And haue receyud your letters, dated at Andwarpe the .xviiij. day of Aprill, with also that parte of Tyndale’s boke [*sewed and*] inclosed in lether, which yt with your letters directed to the Kinges Highnes. After the recept whereof, I dyd repayre vnto the courte, and there presented the same vnto his royall maiestie. Who [*after the recept thereof*] made me answer for that tyme that his highnes at oportune leysour wolde vysite ouersee and rede the contents as well of your letters as also the saide boke. And at my next repayre thither, it pleased his highnes to call for me, declaring vnto me as well the contentes of your letters as also moche matter conteyned in the said boke of Tyndalles. And albeit that I might well perceyue that his maiestee was right well pleased, and right acceptable considered your diligence, and paynes taken in the wryting and sending of the saide boke, as also in the perswading and exhorting of Tyndall to repayre into this realme [*in the accom-* <sup>yet his highnes</sup> nothing lyked the sayd boke being fylled with sedycyous slanderous lyes and *plishment of his high pleasure and commaundement.* Yet I Faninstycall oppynyons. Shewing therein nether lernyng nor trewth *might coniecture by the farther declaracyon of his high plea-* and fether conference with his grace, I myght well perceyue that he thought *sure.* Which sayed vnto me, by your wryting it manyfestlie that ye bare moche *appered how moche*] affection, [*love and zele ye do bere*] towards <sup>& knowledge in woordlye thinges</sup> the saide Tyndall, whom in his maners, [*modestie and symplycitee*] <sup>in your letters</sup> ye vndoubtedlie do moche [*more*] allowe and commende [*then his*] <sup>being replete with so</sup> workes [*being soreplete with lyes and most*] abhomynablesclaunders, <sup>and lyes</sup> Imagened and <sup>onlye</sup> fayned to enfecte [*and intoxicate*] the peopull, [(*may*

\* In the British Museum.

him to lake grace, native lerning, godly  
*to indyfferent judgement]* declareth *[him)* *for the which your fauours*  
 discrecyon and all other good qualities, nothing else pretending in all his  
*supposed to be born to the saide Tyndall, who assuredlie sheweth*  
 workes but evedente dyssaite

*himself, in myn opynyon rather to be replete with venymous*  
*envye, rancour, and malice then with any good lerning, vertue,*  
*or discession, hathe put the kinge highnes in suspectyon of*

*you, considering]* that <sup>ye</sup> *[ye should]* in such wise <sup>by your letters prayse,</sup> *[lene vnto and favour*  
 set forth, and avaunce hym. which nothing elles pretendyth

*the evill doctryne of so perverse and malycyous a person, and so*  
*moche prayse him. Who nothing goeth about, or pretendeth,]*

but *[one lie to seduce, deceyue, and]* disquiet <sup>and sowe sedycyon</sup> *[the people and*  
 among the peopull of this realme.

*comenwelth of this realme. Whose cummyng into Englande*

*the Kinges highnes can right well forbere and]* <sup>His highnestherfore</sup> hathe com-

maunded me <sup>to aduertise you that his pleasure is</sup> *[expressly]* to wryte *[vnto you,]* that ye shoulde desyste

and leve eny ferther to persuade or attempte <sup>the sayd Tyndale to cum into this realme</sup> *[him there unto.]*

Alledging that <sup>he</sup> *[his maiestie so euedentlie]* perceyuing the maly-

<sup>and judgment of the said Tyndall is in maner without hope of</sup>  
*cyous, perverse, vncharytable mynde [and disposicyon of the said*  
*reconcylyacyon in hym, and is veray joyous to haue his realme destytute of such a*  
*Tyndall is rather]* veray glad *[that he is out of his realme]* then  
 person is

that he should retourne into the same, there to manyfest his errorrs  
 and sedycyous opynyons, which (being out of the Realme by  
 his most vncharytable, venemous, and pestilent bokes, craftie

<sup>For hys hyghnes right prudentlye consyderyth</sup>  
 and false persuasions) he hathe partlie don all redie. <sup>▲</sup> *[So that]* if

he were present by all lykelehod, he wolde shortelie <sup>he might</sup> (which God  
 defende) do asmoche as in him were to infecte and corrupt  
 the hole realme, to the grete inquietacyon and hurte of the

<sup>Wherfor Stephen</sup>  
 comen welth of the same. *[Wherfore]* <sup>▲</sup> I hertelie pray you, that  
*[from hensforth]* in all your doinge *[and]* procedynge, and wryting

<sup>without dissimulacyon</sup>  
 to the kinges highnes, ye do iustely, trewlie, and vnfaynedlie, <sup>▲</sup>

shew yourself his trew louyng, obedyent subiect. Beryng no maner favour, love, or  
 [shew yourself to be no fauerer vnto the saide] Tyndall, ne to his  
 affection vnto the said

workes in any maner of wise, but [rather] vtterlie [to] contempne

and abhorre the same. Assuring you that <sup>in so</sup> doing [the contrary,]

ye shall not onlie cause the kinges [highnes] royall maieste, whose

<sup>goodnes</sup> [highnes] at this tyme is so benignelie and gracyouslie mynded

towardses you (as by your good dyligence and industrie to be

vsed to serue his highnes, and extewing and avoyding to favor

and allow the saide Tyndall his erronyous workes and opynyons)

ye are like shortlie to atteyne <sup>so to sett you forwardes, as all your lovers</sup> [both welth, honestie, and pro-

and friends shall haue gret consolacyon of the same.

mocyon at his gracyous hande, to the singuler ioy, pleasure,

and comforte of all your frendes,] and by the contrarie <sup>doing, ye shal</sup> [to] ac-

quire the indignacyon of God [and] displeasure of your souereigne

lorde, and by the same <sup>cause</sup> [compell] your good frendes which haue

ben euer glad, prone, and redie to <sup>bryng into his gracyous</sup> [aduanche] you [vnto the] fauours

[of your prynce,] to lamente and sorow, that their sute in that

behalf should <sup>be frustrate and</sup> not take effecte, according to their good intent

and purpose. Hauing therefore firme trust, that for the loue ye

owe to yourself, me, and [other] your frendes, ye <sup>will</sup> [wilbe well]

<sup>and often</sup> beware, [from hensforth,] to enter into any [soche] opynyons,

whereby any sclaunder, dishonestie, <sup>or suspicyon</sup> [or] daungier might insue

towardses you; whereof I promyse you I wold be as sorie as

<sup>naturall</sup> your [good] father. As touching Frith, mencyoned in your saide

letters, the kinges highnes, heryng tell of his towardenes in

good letters and lernyng, doth <sup>moche</sup> [regrete and] lament that he

should in such wise as he doth, set fourth, shew, and applye

his lernyng and doctryne in the semynacyon and sewing such

euill seedes of dampnable and detestable heresies, mayntenynge,

bolstring, and aduancyng the venemous and pestyferous workes,

erronyous and sedycyous opynyons of the saide Tyndale, and other such. Wherein his highnes <sup>lyke</sup> [as] a most vertuous and benigne prynce and gouernour, hauing charge [*commytted vnto him*] of his people and subiectes, <sup>and veraye</sup> being <sup>and holsom doctryne of holye fathers, into</sup> sorie to here tell that any of the same should in suche wise ronne hedling and digresse from the lawes [*and precepte*] of Almightye God, <sup>such dampnable</sup> [*into suche dampnable*] heresies and sedycyous opynyons, and being ever inclyned, willing, and gretelie desirous to forst and prouyde and moche desyryng the reconsylyacyon of the sayd Fryth <sup>he</sup> for the same, <sup>and</sup> also fermelie trusting that [*the saide Frith*] be not so farre as yet inrouted in the evill doctryne of the saide <sup>and other</sup> Tindall, but that by the grace of God, louyng, charitable, and frendely exhortacions and aduertisements of good people, he may be [*revoked and*] called agayne to the ryght way. [*Wylleth*] <sup>me to wryt vnto you, that ye</sup> therefore, [*and desireth you*], according to his trust and expectacyon, <sup>will</sup> with your frendelie persuasions, admonycyons, and holsome exhortacions, counsaill and aduyse the said Fryth, if ye may convenientlie speke with the same to leue his wilfull opynyons, and like a good christian to retorne [*vnto our Saue-where he shall assurydly fynde the kynges highnes most mercyfull and benynglye our Christe, and also*] into his natif cuntrey. <sup>hath wylled</sup> So that by his vpon his conuersyon, disposyd to accept hym to his grace and joye procedinge as he begynneth, there be no more [*sedycyous infections and heresies sowed amongst the kinges peopull.*] Wherefore <sup>exort you</sup> eftesones I [*hartelie pray you,*] and for the loue of God [*do*] not onelie [*exhorte you*] vtterlie to forsake, leue, and withdraw your affectyon from the saide Tyndale, and all his secte; but also as moch as ye can poletiquelie and charytable, to allure <sup>the sayd Frith and other</sup> being in these parties which in any wyse ye shall knowe or suspecte to be all suche persons [*as ben*] fautours and assistants to the same, from all their erronyous myndes and opynyons. In which doing ye shall not onelie highlie merite <sup>in</sup> [*of*] Almightye God, but



also deserue hygh thankys of the kinges royall maiestee, who will not forget your deuoyre and labours in that behalf. So that majestee may <sup>euydentlie</sup> perceyue that ye effectuellie do intende the same."

Such were the arbitrary practices of bye-gone days never to return. The King chose to profess his belief in certain speculative dogmas, but was not content to allow his subjects the same liberty of choice. He ordered them to believe as he did. He did not require uniformity of features, but that which was equally absurd, mental uniformity; and because Tyndale honestly avowed a difference of opinion on these dogmas, although he was a most loyal subject, an excellent citizen, his highly cultivated mind rendering him an ornament to society, one who exemplified every moral virtue in his conduct, still he is denounced together with all those who did not speak evil of him. That system, called religious, which by human laws interfered with the sacred rights of conscience, produced the same baneful effect on the mind of Henry which it had done on that of Sir Thomas More.

Tyndale's learned and affectionate friend Frith, relying on promises never intended to be kept, came to England. His amiable temper and deep store of acquired knowledge pleaded nothing in his favour. He refused to profess a belief in doctrines to which no human intellect could honestly assent, and at which his heart revolted. He was immediately apprehended and sent to the Tower, whence this highly-gifted and learned young man was conveyed to that aceldama where many of the most virtuous and pious men of the age were slaughtered, and from a Smithfield fire he ascended to his eternal rest. Two Romish clergymen exhorted the people not to pray for Frith any more than they would for a dog: at this the martyr smiled and prayed God to forgive them; but the people "sore grudged at them for so saiynge."

## CHAPTER IX.

“ By his rare pains, firm faith, and Christ’s free grace,  
 Which formerly thick fogs of error base,  
 And dusky clouds of works’ desert hid quite,  
 Were well restored to their ancient light.  
 He, by God’s word and Spirit’s inspiration,  
 The gospel light re-spread throughout our nation.  
 His ashes, kept by heaven, securely rest,  
 And sweetly sleep in hope to rise most blessed.”

QUARLES.

HIS HABITS AND LABOURS AT ANTWERP—REPUBLICS THE NEW  
 TESTAMENT—IS BETRAYED, IMPRISONED, AND MARTYRED.

TYNDALE’S habits, for the few years that he resided at Antwerp, were most actively benevolent. He was the almoner of his more wealthy countrymen. Saturday and Sunday were his days of relaxation from severe study : on the former, he visited the sick and dying foreigners, and on Sunday, both before and after divine service, he visited and relieved his fellow exiles. Persecution for conscience sake, like a dreadful pestilence, ravaged his native country, sweeping away with the besom of destruction the most pious and benevolent of her sons. Many, to escape a cruel death, fled to Antwerp in the greatest distress ; and they obtained from Tyndale consolation and a supply for their pressing wants. In bestowing alms, he appeared like an angel of mercy : in preaching, he spoke like an apostle. These qualities which dignify human nature, only excited the more bitter animosity of those who were persecuting Christ in the persons of his pious and devoted disciples.

The laborious studies which occupied the great portion of his time, were in vindicating himself and the reformation from the slan-

ders of Sir Thomas More, and in completing the translation of the Sacred Scriptures. It is impossible to decide, without the discovery of new evidence, whether he translated the whole of the Old Testament: the similarity which pervades it, leads me to conclude that he did, and that Coverdale profited by his manuscripts. It is plain, that, from Esdras to Malachi, it is one translation, published by Coverdale in 1535,\* and by Matthews in 1537,† with such alterations as pleased the respective editors: from Genesis to Esdras, and the whole New Testament, are distinct translations. Tyndale's name was suppressed in both, on account of the rancorous hostility of Henry against him, for having honestly spoken in opposition to the divorce from Catherine.

From 1526, when he added prologues and glosses to the New Testament, he does not appear to have made any alteration in the text until 1534, when he republished it with considerable improvements, at Antwerp, in small 8vo., entitled, "The Newe Testament, dylygently corrected and compared with the Greke, by Willyam Tindale, and fynesshed in the yere of oure Lorde God, A. M. D. and xxxiiij. in the moneth of Nouember." It has wood cuts and ornamented letters. The title and prologues comprise sixteen leaves, followed by a second title and list of books. The text occupies ccclxxxiv leaves, the two last being numbered wrong. The Pistles of the Olde Testament end on folio cccc. The table follows on ten leaves, the last two pages contain "thinges to fill vp the leffe withal." Some copies were printed on yellow paper.

In this edition, Tyndale took advantage of friendly and hostile criticisms, and endeavoured to render his version still more faithful by the result of profound studies. A fair specimen of the new readings are given at the close of this memoir. The prologue commences with, "Here thou hast (moost deare reader) the New Testament or covenant made wyth vs of God in Christes bloude. Which I have looked over agayne (now at the last) with all dylygence, and compared it vnto the Greke," &c. This pro-

\* Printed at Cologne, republished at Zurich, 1550.

† Printed at Lubeck, and published by Grafton, in London.

logue was reprinted, verbatim, with every subsequent edition. It closes with a defence of the use he made of the words repentance and elders. To this he added a second preface, very severely reflecting upon G. Joye. The occasion of this was, that Joye, having been employed by a Dutch printer to correct the press of the fourth pirated edition, had altered some words, and particularly Repentance, for which he put "the life after this." At this time the reformers were daily expecting the corrected edition, when Joye published and circulated his, three months before Tyndale's was finished. Many of the exiled reformers waited on Tyndale to inquire the reason why these fanciful alterations had been made; and he soon found, that a surreptitious book had been imposed upon the public by Joye. In the second preface to Tyndale's edition, he very properly warns the public of this discreditable imposition. During Tyndale's imprisonment, in February, 1535, Joye published what he called an apology, but which was a very intemperate attack upon his friend and brother exile, then in prison, and in imminent danger of martyrdom. Joye alleges that he received only fourteen shillings Flemish, about eight shillings British, for his labours, and that he heard say, that Tyndale had ten pounds for his copyright. His defence is, that it was intended solely to render the New Testament more useful, but he does not apologise for nor defend his having made alterations and published them under Tyndale's name. The prologues in Tyndale's revised edition, and the 4to. of 1526, are very similar to those of the German, by Luther. This of 1534 may be distinguished from all the subsequent impressions by a discrepancy in the marginal notes in 1 John's epistle, ch. 3, "Loue is the fyrst precept and cause of all other;" while on the opposite page he says, "Fayth is the fyrst commaundement and loue the seconde;" also, by the omission of the tenth line in Revelations, ch. 9, and by an error mentioned in the prologue: it occurs in Matthew xxij. "Clense fyrst the out syde of the cup," &c. which should have been, "Clense fyrst the inside," &c. The most singular rendering in the whole volume was continued in all the editions. Death in the Revela-

tions, is mounted on a green horse. It was in this same year, 1534, that Tyndale was treacherously betrayed and imprisoned.

Sir Thomas More, in the examination of persons accused of heresy, especially such as had come from Flanders or Germany, questioned them minutely as to their knowledge of Tyndale. He had thus obtained a description of his person, dress, habits, friends, and places of resort. He now lodged in the English house or factory, which was kept by a merchant, Thomas Pointz. Henry VIII. and his council suborned and employed one Henry Phillips, the son of a custom-house officer at Poole, of gentlemanly appearance, who, with a valet, came to Antwerp: having made acquaintance with some of the merchants, he met Tyndale, and he, without suspicion, placed a fatal confidence in him, and invited him to his apartments. Pointz, having some suspicion, asked Tyndale how they became acquainted; to which he replied, that he was an honest man and handsomely learned; and Pointz, finding that he had made so favourable an impression on his learned friend, desisted from further inquiry. Phillips, after having for some time dined at his table and partaken of his hospitality, went to Brussels, and with great pains and expense obtained a warrant to apprehend Tyndale for heresy. To execute it, he brought back with him the procurer-general and his officials, not daring to trust the officers of Antwerp, where his victim was so much beloved. Having detained these persons at Antwerp until Pointz had left that city on business, he then called at the house of Pointz, and Tyndale invited him to go and dine with him at the house of one of his friends, assuring him of a hearty welcome. The villain then, under a pretence of having lost his purse, borrowed of his unsuspecting victim all his money. In passing through the narrow entry of the hotel, Phillips, with apparent courtesy, insisted on Tyndale going first; and, as his victim was much shorter than himself, when they came to the door, he pointed down on Tyndale: immediately the officers whom he had placed there, seized him together with all his books and papers. He was in this pennyless condition conveyed to the prison at Vilvoord, a village at the ford between Brussels and Malines, on

the road to Antwerp. If ever there was seen the perfection of unprincipled villany, to the utter disgrace of human nature, it was in this diabolical agent to the Roman Catholic party in England, —Phillips.

Every effort which the most affectionate regard and veneration for Tyndale could prompt, was made by Pointz and the British merchants at Antwerp, to obtain the liberation of their beloved pastor; but it was in vain. Letters were immediately dispatched to Lord Cromwell and others in England; and favourable answers having arrived, Pointz, at the request of the body of English merchants, went with the communications to the Lord of Barowe, following him post to Maestricht, that he might deliver them in person, and with great difficulty he obtained his answer. With this he hastened to Brussels. The imperial council gave him a letter to Lord Cromwell, and Pointz undertook to carry it in person to London with all possible speed. Here he was detained for a month, but, by perseverance and interest, he obtained favourable letters, with which he went direct to Brussels. His zeal for the pious preacher nearly cost him his life; for Phillips, finding that these powerful efforts were likely to succeed, managed, by the aid of the Roman Catholic priests at Louvain, to have Pointz arrested on suspicion of heresy, and committed to prison. Within one week he was examined upon more than a hundred articles. He was prohibited from intercourse with his friends, unless his letters were written in the Dutch language and sent through the medium of his persecutors. Finding that his life was in imminent danger, he broke out of his prison by night, and made his escape. Still, although under such perilous circumstances, he persevered in his efforts to save the life of Tyndale. On the 25th of August, 1535, he wrote to his brother in London a letter honourable to his pious and affectionate regard for his friend and pastor.\* “It was said that the King had written in favour of William Tyndall, now in prison, and like to suffer death, and it is feared that these letters have been intercepted.

\* This letter is preserved in the Cottonian MSS. The spelling is in some instances altered, to render it easily intelligible.

This man lodged with me three quarters of a yere.—I know that the King has never a treuer hearted subject this day living. He knows that he is bound by the law of God to obey his prince; and I know well that he would not do the contrary to be made lorde of the worlde. The death of this man will be a great hindraunce to the Gospel; and to the enemies of it, one of the highest pleasures. I fear that he will be shortly condemned, for two English men at Louvain apply it sore, taking great pains to translate out of English into Latin, those things that may make against him, so that the clergy here may understand it and condemn him, as they have done all others, for keeping apenyonys *contrary to their business, the which they call the order of holy church*. Brother, the knowledge that I have of this man causes me to write as my conscience binds me. *For the king's grace should esteem him at this day as a greater treasure than any one man living.*" Pointz was a wealthy and highly respectable man, who, in a few years after these melancholy transactions, returned to England, and obtained an act of parliament to naturalize his children. The character which he gave Tyndale, and his efforts, at the imminent risk of his own life, to save him, show the high estimation in which this pious, talented, and amiable man was held by those who enjoyed his society. The British merchants who constantly associated with him, knew his worth, and esteemed him accordingly. The letter of Pointz, sent to Lord Cromwell, is preserved among the state papers in the British Museum. Tyndale's imprisonment lasted nearly two years, during which time he was incessantly employed in the great object of extending the genial influence of pure religion. His amiable and pious conduct obtained for him every indulgence that could be allowed to a prisoner, which enabled him to carry on a sharp controversy with the professors at the neighbouring university of Louvain.

In his imprisonment, he redeemed his pledge given to the priest in Gloucestershire many years before, that the ploughboys should have the New Testament to read. In 1535, was printed a very curious edition of Tyndale's version. In this he imitated the plan of Luther, who published the New Testament in three different

dialects of Germany. Following this plan, he printed the revised version of the preceding year in a provincial orthography, probably that of his native county; peculiarly adapted to agricultural labourers. From a copy in my library, late the property of Dr. Adam Clarke, I extract the following specimen:—holly cite, for holy city; saeyde, aengels, wayghthyer, foete, behoelde, broether, faether, moether, tacken, agaeynst, theacheth, graece, cloocke for cloke, maester, saefe, shaeke, &c. &c. To this book was added the heads of chapters, as far as I have been able to discover, for the first time.

The termination of his invaluable life, and of all his sufferings, now drew nigh. His anticipations of release from sin and sorrow, and an exaltation to the bliss of angels, his desires to join the bright and glorious company of heaven, were about to be realized. He who said, “Fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul,” most eminently comforted and supported his servant. Having exhorted others to constancy, he was now to practise the fiery lesson. The formalities of a trial were gone through, and he was condemned by virtue of a decree made at Augsburg against what was called heresy. In September, 1536, he suffered the dreadful sentence. In a moment so appalling, he exhibited that calm firmness and patient resignation which arose from a sure hope of immediate enjoyments indescribable and full of the eternal weight of glory. While he calmly viewed the dread preparations to deprive him of life, and burn his body, his heart mourned over England. His last thoughts were for the eternal welfare of his country, and his dying voice called for mercy on his unrelenting persecutor. He cried out at the stake, “**LORD, OPEN THE KING OF ENGLAND’S EYES.**” He was then strangled; and long ere his body was reduced to ashes, his soul had commenced the glorious anthems of the redeemed of God, who had washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.





“ Rome thundred death, but Tyndale’s dauntless eye  
 Looked in death’s face and smiled, death standing by.  
 In spite of Rome, for England’s faith he stood,  
 And in the flames he sealed it with his blood.”

Many times have I stood upon the spot, a rising ground near the prison at Vilvoord, where these awful cruelties were inflicted ; and my soul has felt humbled at the recollection of the atrocious deeds of my fellow men. Here, during the revolution at Brussels in 1830, I was taken prisoner by a detachment of Dutch troops, and for about two hours was detained in the prison built on the ruins of the castle where the immortal Tyndale was confined. Inquiries which I had formerly made of an aged jailor, were renewed to the one who had taken his place. For a moment, the sickening horrors of war, the sound of the artillery, the wretchedness of the fugitives, the wounded and the dying, were effaced by these eager inquiries ; but no vestige of the martyr remained.

Several times I have searched the archives at Brussels ; but, although most kindly assisted by a friend high in the establishment,

nothing could be found relative to Tyndale. Many waggon-loads of valuable papers were not arranged. The only discovery worthy notice was, that it cost the Government for rushes, post, chains, &c. a sum nearly amounting to one pound thirteen shillings, to burn a poor Scotchman for heresy.

The conduct of Tyndale in jail won the heart of his keeper, who, with his daughter and some of the household, became converts to the cross of Christ. Even the Emperor's attorney-general, who had obtained the sentence against him, solemnly declared that he was a learned, a good, and a godly man.

His character is thus drawn by Francis Quarles, author of the *Divine Emblems*.\*

“ Zeal crowned his heart and made him to outvie  
 Papistick stories of hell-bred tyranny ;  
 He fear'd them not, but boldly would dispute  
 Against their swelling errours, and confute  
 Their principles with a most dexterous art ;  
 His tongue was never traytor to his heart ;  
 Truth was the hand that pointed to the way,  
 Where full content and rich salvation lay.  
 'Twas not a loathsome prison could devorse  
 His ready lips from the profound discourse  
 Of true religion, nothing could prevent  
 His just endeavours. Time he thought mispent  
 If not employed to good ; reader, admire,  
 His body flam'd to make his soule a fire.”

\* Fuller's *Abel Redivivus*, 4to. 1651. p. 130.

## CHAPTER X.

“ He, living, stopt Rome’s breath,  
And dead will be Rome’s death.”

HIS DYING PRAYER ANSWERED—SPREAD OF HIS OPINIONS—THE BIBLE TRIUMPHS—ACT TO ABOLISH TYNDALE’S WORKS—LIST OF HIS WRITINGS—COMPARISON OF HIS FIRST EDITION OF THE NEW TESTAMENT WITH THAT FINALLY REVISED BY HIM.

THE dying voice of the Martyr had scarcely been uttered, before his prayer was answered, and the eyes of the King were so far opened, that he issued an injunction, ordering that the Bible should be placed in every church for the free use of the people. In this year (1536) were published seven or eight editions of the New Testament in English. One of them, in royal 8vo. probably executed in Paris, is a peculiarly beautiful specimen of black-letter typography.

During the short period that the people were allowed the use of the Scriptures, many learned to read, that they might enjoy those treasures which had been so long hid. Amongst this number, Strype narrates the adventures of one who suffered from the deadly animosity to the Scriptures engendered by ignorance and the errors of education. It excited a father to a state of diabolical frenzy against his son, for denying that worship was due to a wooden cross. The name of the sufferer was William Malden. When the King had allowed the Bible to be read in all churches, several poor men at Chelmsford bought the New Testament, and on Sundays sat reading it at the lower end of the church. Many flocked about them to hear it read, and he, among the rest, came every Sunday to hear the glad and sweet tidings of the gospel. But his father observing it, angrily fetched him away, and would have him say the Latin matins with him. This led him to learn English, that he might read the New Testament himself; which when he had

by diligence effected, he and his father's apprentice bought the New Testament, and, to conceal it, laid it under the bed straw, and read it at convenient times. One night, his father being asleep, he and his mother chanced to discourse concerning the crucifix,—the kneeling down to it and knocking on the breast, then used, and the holding up the hands to it when it came by on procession. This, he told his mother, was plain idolatry, and against the commandment of God, where he saith, Thou shalt not make any graven image, nor bow down to it, nor worship it. His mother, enraged at his words, said, Will thou not worship the cross, which was about thee when thou wert christened, and must be laid on thee when thou art dead? In this heat the mother and son parted, and went to their beds. The sum of the evening's conference she presently repeats to her husband, who boiling with fury, arose and went into his son's chamber, where, like a mad zealot, taking him by the hair of his head with both his hands, he pulled him out of the bed and whipped him unmercifully. And when the young man bore this beating with joy, considering it was for Christ's sake, and shed not a tear, his father was more enraged, and ran down and fetched an halter, and put it about his neck, saying he would hang him. At length, with much entreaty of the mother and brother, he left him, almost dead.

The New Testament of this translation was most extensively multiplied. Twenty-three different editions are in my library, besides ten of Coverdale's translation, printed during the same period.

In 1538, Coverdale superintended the printing of the great Bible in Paris. In this, he took Tyndale's version as his basis, making many alterations from his own translation, and some probably at the suggestions of Cranmer and the English reformers. This is the version now used in the Psalter and lessons printed in the Book of Common Prayer.\* Numerous interpolations were introduced into the text. This continued to be the authorised Bible for nearly thirty years.

Such was the amazing zeal of the people to receive the Scriptures,

\* The interpolations are printed in the Prayer-book as part of the text: see Psalm 14, and in the Communion. In the great Bible, they were printed between brackets, and in a different type.

that, before the close of the year 1541, sixteen distinct editions of the whole Bible were printed, each of which consisted of from fifteen to twenty-five hundred copies.

Upon their being set up for public use in the churches, great numbers resorted to read or hear them read, insomuch that the people selected one who had the clearest voice to read for the benefit of the multitude, who resorted to them instead of hearing mass. This gave great offence to the clergy, and they seriously complained that the service of the mass was interrupted. The bishops placed over these public Bibles, orders and regulations, threatening to remove them unless the strictest decorum was preserved. Those for the diocese of London were to this effect:—"The Bible is to be read with all devocion, humilitie, and quyetnesse, the reader leuing behynde hym vayne glorye, hypocrisie, and all other carnall and corrupte affections, bring with him discretion, honeste intente, charytie, reuerence, and quyet behauour; he is not to expound nor to reade with a lowde voyce, and without disputacion." At length, an order was issued that none should read aloud. The King also issued a proclamation to the same effect. Soon after this, Henry became restless and unstable; and the popish party prevailed. Every means was employed to prevent the Bible from being read, and orders were given to the curates to search their parishes for Tyndale's Testaments and his works. At length, on the 20th of January, 1543, an act of parliament was passed rigorously to suppress all the writings of Tyndale, and to limit the reading of Cranmer's or Coverdale's translations to certain classes of persons. The bill is entitled most strangely, "An act for the aduancement of true religion, and for the abolishment of the contrary." The original edition printed by Berthelet in 1544, is in my possession, from which the following extracts are made:—"That all manner of bookes of the Old and Newe Testament in Englishe, beinge of the crafty, false, and vntrue translation of Tyndall, shall be clerely and vtterlie abolished, extinguished, and forbidden to be kept or vsed." The punishment of disobedience was, for the first offence, ten pounds sterling fine, equal to about fifty pounds at the present value of money, and three months' imprisonment *for every book*; and for the second offence,

loss of all the offender's goods, and perpetual imprisonment. Bibles and Testaments not by Tyndale were to have all the prologues and notes cut out. Chaucer's tales, Gower's love stories, songs, plays and interludes are named in the act with full liberty to be read by all persons. The reading of the Scripture is limited to judges, noblemen, captains and justices, who are allowed to read the Bible to their families. " Merchants may read it in private to themselves ; but no women or artificers, prentyses, iorneyman, seruyng man of the degrees of yomen or vnder, no husbandman, nor labourers, shall reade wythin this realme the Bible or New Testament in Englyshe to hym self, or to any other priviatly or openly." A separate clause allows noble women or gentlewomen to read it privately. His highness declares that *by lawes dredfull and penall* he will purge and clense his realme of all suche books ! It is a very extraordinary circumstance, that there is no clause to allow the clergy to read the Bible in English.

The provisions of this act are so monstrous as to need no comment. The wealthy, whose education enabled them to read the Bible in Latin, and who in consequence could not be prevented from reading it, were permitted to use it in English ; but the millions of unlettered souls were not to have the gospel, but to be shut up in the darkness of ignorance. The system which required such a law to support it, loved darkness because it was evil.

As age crept on, Henry became peevish, restless, and wretched, and was guided by the enemies to the Bible. In July, 1547, he issued a sweeping proclamation against Coverdale's Bible, Tyndale's Bible and Testament, and all the works of Coverdale, Tyndale, Barnes, Joye, Roy, and others of that persuasion. Among the works of Tyndale, is specified, " The Parable and Complaynte of the Plowman unto Christe." This tract must be exceedingly rare, since it has escaped all the researches of our bibliographers. Every person who kept a copy or portion of a copy of any of these books, was to be punished as a heretic.

In those trying times, when the bread of life was eaten in secret, the poor deeply felt the privation. Thus a labourer wrote in a book, " On the invention of things, at Oxforde the yere 1546 browt down to Seynbury by John Darbye, price 14*d*. When I kepe

Mr. Letymers shype I bout thys boke, when the Testament was aberagatyn, that shepherdys might not red hit: I pray God amende that blyndnes. Wryt by Robert Wyllyams, keppynge shepe vppon Seynbury Hill." The prayer of this pious shepherd was soon fulfilled.

Before I close this memoir, it may be proper to remark, that it is not possible to identify Tyndale with any of the little detachments of Christians called sects, the whole of which form the Christian army. These differences have at all times existed, both in the Jewish, the Roman Catholic, the Greek, and the Protestant churches; whether they be called Pharisees, Dominicans, Calvinists, Sadducees, Franciscans, Arminians, or by any other term. Tyndale's time was so fully occupied in defending the great principles of Christianity, that his sentiments upon what are called non-essentials cannot be ascertained. This is certain, that he most justly conceived the church of Christ to consist of all those who from conviction and affection received the gospel, and proved their sincerity by strict morality and amiable conduct; all those who were obedient unto faith, and considered Christ to be the sole head of his universal church.

The republication of this volume, formerly prohibited under the severest penalties, is not merely intended to gratify the antiquary or the philologist, but to promote and assist researches after divine truth. The severe trials of our forefathers have secured to us extensive privileges: they sowed the seed with tears; we are reaping the harvest with joy. They immortalized their names by having, through sufferings almost inconceivable, given to us the inspired volume. And be it our glory to send this heavenly gift to the uttermost parts of the earth; until its triumphs shall be completed by exterminating war, slavery, and all other evils, and by disposing every human being to seek the glory of God, in promoting peace on earth and good-will towards his fellow men.

GEORGE OFFOR.

## LIST OF BOOKS

*Either ascribed to Tyndale, or published with his name.*

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The Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments and the Apocrypha. Published in folio, 1537, 1538, 1549, 1549, 1551, 1551, and in octavo, 4 vols. 1549 and 1551.

The New Testament, 1525, revised in 1534. Not less than eighty distinct editions were printed. In 1549, R. Wolf published Coverdale's Text, with 499 variations of Tyndale. Upon a comparison with the present translation, it was found that of these readings, 195 of Tyndale's were adopted. 120 of Coverdale's, and slight alterations from both in 184 texts.

The Pentateuch. 1530, 1534, 1544, 1551.

The Prophet Jonah. 1530, 1537.

Exposition of v. vi. and vii. chapters of Matthew. 1538, 1548.

The Epistles of John, with a Comment. 1531, 1538.

Exposition of 1 Cor. vii. with Prologue. 1529.

Expositions of 1 Cor. iv., John vi., and 1 Cor. xi.

Prologues to many Books of the Old and New Testament.

A Boke concerning the Church.

A Godly Disputation between a Christian Shoemaker and a Popish Parson.

The disclosing of the Man of Sin.

The Matrimony of Tyndale. 1529.

Wiclif's Wicket, with a Preface.

A Compendious Olde Treatise, shewynge howe that we ought to haue y<sup>r</sup> Scripture in Englysshe. Luft, 1530.\*

The Prayer and Complaint of a Plowman unto Christ.

The Supplication of Beggars.

A Treatise upon Signs and Sacraments.

The Testament of William Tracy expounded.

Three Epistles to Frith.

\* This exceedingly rare tract, one sheet in 8vo. once Herbert's, is now in my library. I believe it to be unique.



A Protestation touching the Resurrection of the Bodies and the State of the Souls after this Life. 1530.

Parable of the Wicked Mammon. Small 8vo. and 4to. May, 1528.

Obedience of a Christen Man. May and Oct. 1528, 1535, 1561.

An Answer unto Sir Thos. More's Dialogues.

A Pathway into the Scripture.

An Answer to Sir Thos. More's Confutation.

The Practice of Prelates. 1530, 1548.

IN LATIN.

De coena Domini. }  
De ecclesia adversus. } against More.

Adversus Joy calumnias.

De purgatorii parocho.

Preface to G. Thorpi et J. Oldcastelli examinat.

TRANSLATIONS.

Quædam Opuscula Lutheri.

Enchiridion Militis Christiani.

Isocrates Orationes.

SELECT  
COLLATIONS OF THE FIRST AND SECOND EDITIONS

OF

Tyndale's New Testament ;

CONTAINING ALL THE VARIATIONS IN MATTHEW, CHAPTERS i.—vii. ;  
JOHN, CHAPTERS x.—xv. ; AND IN THE EPISTLE TO THE GALATIANS.\*

FIRST EDITION, 1525-6.	MATTHEW.	REVISED IN 1534.
	Ch. 1.	
of the captivete of Babilon	- B.	they were caryed awaye to Babylon*
After they wer ledd captive to Babilon	—	And after they were brought to Babylon*
of whome was boren*	—	of which was boren
The byrthe off Christe	- C.	The byrthe of Jesus Christ*
mary was maryed vnto Joseph	—	May was betrouthed to Joseph.
loth to defame her	—	loth to make an ensample of hir
in slepe	—	in a dreame*
which is, as moche to saye be interpretacion, as God with vs	- D.	which is by interpretacion God with vs
	Ch. 2.	
in Bethleem a toune of Jury	- A.	at Bethleem in Jury
king Herode	—	Herode the kynge
Herode the kynge, after he hadd herde thys.	—	When Herode y <sup>e</sup> kynge had herde thys.
he sent for all the chefe	—	he gathered all y <sup>e</sup> chefe
and demaunded off them†	—	and axed of them
a toune of Jury	—	in Jury
shalt not be the leest as perteyninge to the princes	—	art not the leest concernynge the Princes
a captaine, whych	—	the captayne, that
When ye be come thyder searche	- B.	Goo and searche*
entred into the house	—	went into the house
warned in ther slepe	—	warned of God in a dreame*
After that they were	- C.	When they were*
in his slepe	—	in dreame*

\* The readings marked with a \* are retained in the present authorised version.

FIRST EDITION, 1525-6.

MATTHEW.

REVISED IN 1534.

When Herod was deed, Lo an  
angell off the lorde apared vnto  
Joseph in egipte saynge

which sought the chyldes deeth  
warned in his slepe

knoledging their synnes  
shalbe hewne doune  
with everlastynge fyre  
open vnto hym : and he saw\*  
thys ys my deare sonne

in to a desert  
att the last he was an hungred  
stey the vpp  
and the beauty of them  
the Lorde God  
Beholde the londe  
lyght is spronge\*

maynteyners of peace  
men shall revyle you\*  
if the salt be once unsavery  
but to be cast oute at the dores,  
and that men treade it vnder  
fete

all them which are  
Se that youre light  
Ye shall not thinke  
to disanull  
shall teache\*

shall observe and teache them,  
that persone shalbe called  
greate

But whosoever shall saye unto  
his brother thou fole  
eny thynge agaynst the  
reconcile thy silfe  
at once  
thine adversary

Ch. 2.

- D.

—

—

Ch. 3.

- A.

- C.

—

- D.

—

Ch. 4.

—

—

- B.

—

—

- C.

—

Ch. 5.

- A.

—

- B.

—

—

—

- C.

—

—

—

- D.

—

—

—

—

When Herode was deed:\* be-  
holde, an angell of y<sup>e</sup> Lorde ap-  
pered in a dreame to Joseph  
in Egypte sayinge

which sought y<sup>e</sup> chyldes life  
warned of god in a dreame\*

confessynge their synnes\*

is hewen doune\*

with vnquencheable fyre\*

open over hym : and Jhon sawe

Thys ys that my beloved sonne

into wildernes\*

he was afterward an hungred\*

holde y<sup>e</sup> v<sup>p</sup>

and all y<sup>e</sup> glorie of them\*

y<sup>e</sup> Lorde thy God\*

The londe\*

lyght is begone to shyne

peacemakers\*

men reuyle you

yf y<sup>e</sup> salt have lost hir saltnes,

but to be cast oute,\* and to be  
troaden vnder fote of men

all that are\*

Let youre light\*

Thinke not\*

to destroye\*

teacheth

obserueth and teacheth, y<sup>e</sup> same  
shalbe called greate

But whosoever sayeth thou fole,

ought agaynst the\*

be reconcyled\*

quicklye\*

that adversary

FIRST EDITION, 1525-6.

MATTHEW.

REVISED IN 1534.

eyeth a wyfe  
 a testimonyall of her  
 one heer whyte, or blacke :  
 ye withstond not wronge  
 But yf a man  
 and take thy coote from the  
 youre hevenly father

the gentyls do  
 them which treaspas vs  
 but delyvre vs from yvell, Amen.

that hit myght apere vnto men  
 that they faste  
 Gaddre not treasure together on  
 erth  
 there are youre hertes also.  
 ys full of light.  
 what rayment ye shall weare  
 Are ye not better than they?

Beholde the lyles  
 Care not for therfore for the daye  
 foloyng: For the daye folo-  
 ynge shall care ffor yt sylfe.  
 Eche dayes trouble ys suffi-  
 cient for the same silfe day.

Iudge not lest ye be iudged.

which wolde proffer his sonne a  
 stone if he axed him breed?

he that fulfilleth  
 have we not caste  
 and it was not over throwen,  
 and doth not the same

Ch. 5. looketh on a wyfe  
 - E. a testimonyall also of the  
 - F. one white heer, or blacke  
 — ye resist not wronge  
 — But whosoever\*  
 — and take awaye thy coote\*  
 - G. youre father that is in heauen.\*

Ch. 6.  
 - A. the hethen do\*  
 - B. oure trespassers  
 — but delyver vs from evell For  
 thyne is y<sup>e</sup> kyngedome and  
 y<sup>e</sup> power, and y<sup>e</sup> glorye for  
 ever. Amen.\*

- C. that they myght besene of men  
 how they faste

— Se that ye gaddre you not trea-  
 sure vpon y<sup>e</sup> erth

— there will youre hertes be also\*  
 shalbe full of light.\*

- D. what ye shall put on\*

— Are ye not moche better then  
 they?\*

— Considre y<sup>e</sup> lylies\*

— Care not then for the morow,  
 but let y<sup>e</sup> morow care for it  
 selfe: for the daye present  
 hath ever ynough of his awne  
 trouble.

Ch. 7.

— Jvdge not, that ye be not  
 iudged.\*

- B. which if his sonne axed hym  
 bread, wolde offer him a  
 stone?

- C. he that dothe\*

— haue caste\*

— and it fell not,\*

— and doth then not,\*

FIRST EDITION, 1525-6. JOHN, Ch. 10—15. REVISED IN 1534.

Whosoever entreth  
 he is a thefe  
 To this man the porter  
 This manner of sayinge  
 thatt I am the dore  
 a goode  
 and knowe my shepe\*  
 And I geve my sylfe  
 and they shall heare\*  
 And there shalbe won flocke

Agayne there was  
 Solomons hall  
 is greater then all men  
 I have sayde  
 Butt though ye beleve not me

then shall he do wele ynough  
 Jesus spake  
 cam to Martha\*  
 sate stille at home  
 I knowe well, he shall  
 Whosoever\*  
 and called her sister  
 and vexed hym silfe  
 I geve the thankes  
 I knewe wele that  
 with bondes after the manner as  
 they were wonte to bynde their  
 deed with all  
 From that day kept they a coun-  
 sell to gedder

all the housse smelled  
 held  
 which cam  
 Ye se that  
 loo all the worlde goth after  
 hym

## Ch. 10.

— A. he that entreth\*  
 — the same is a thefe\*  
 — to him the porter\*  
 — This similitude  
 — I am the dore\*  
 — y<sup>e</sup> good\*  
 — and knowe myne  
 — And I geve my lyfe  
 — that they maye heare  
 — and that ther maye be one  
     flocke  
 — And ther was  
 — Salomons porche\*  
 — is greater then all\*  
 — I saye  
 — But if I do though ye beleve not  
     me\*

## Ch. 11.

— B. he shall do well ynough  
 — How be it Jesus spake\*  
 — C. were come to Martha  
 — sate still in the housse\*  
 — I knowe that he shall\*  
 — He that  
 — and called Marie her sister\*  
 — D. and was troubled in him selfe  
 — I thanke the\*  
 — I wot that  
 — with grave bondes  
 — From that daye forth they held a  
     counsell to geder\*

## Ch. 12.

— the housse was filled\*  
 — B. therfore held  
 — that were come\*  
 — C. perceave ye how\*  
 — beholde the worlde goth awaye  
     after him

FIRST EDITION, 1525-6. JOHN, Ch. 12. REVISED IN 1534.

be cast out a dores  
 arme off the lorde declared  
 He that putteth me awaye  
 shall iudge  
 my father  
 I knowe wele that his

- E. be cast out\*  
 - F. arme of y<sup>e</sup> Lorde opened  
 - G. He that refuseth me  
 — they shall iudge  
 — the father\*  
 — I knowe that this

## Ch. 13.

had geven him all  
 yff I washe not thy fete  
 but to wesshe his fete, but  
 shall men knowe

- A. had geven all\*  
 - B. yf I wasshe y<sup>e</sup> not\*  
 — save to wesshe his fete, and  
 - D. shall all men knowe\*

## Ch. 14.

I will come agayne  
 verite  
 And ye have sene hym  
 thy father  
 dwellinge in me  
 Beleve that I am in the father,

- A. And yf I go to prepare a place  
 for you, I will come agayne,\*  
 — y<sup>e</sup> truthe\*  
 — and have sene him\*  
 — the father\*  
 - B. that dwelleth in me\*  
 — Beleve me, that I am the father  
 (all the later editions have "in  
 the father")

whosoever beleeveth  
 I will come\*  
 and my father in me,  
 my fathers  
 For the chefe ruelar  
 And as my father

— he that beleveth\*  
 — but will come  
 - C. and you in me,\*  
 — the fathers\*  
 - D. For the rular  
 — therfore as the father

## Ch. 15.

be the meanes of the  
 and I in you\*  
 gadder them\*  
 they burne  
 geven you  
 Because  
 have no  
 they shulde be with oute synne  
 verite

- A. thorow y<sup>e</sup> \*  
 — and let me byde in you.  
 — gadder it  
 — it burneth  
 — done to you\*  
 - C. How be it because  
 — not have had  
 — they had not had synne\*  
 - D. truthe.

THE EPISTLE TO THE  
FIRST EDITION, 1525-6. GALATIANS. REVISED IN 1534.

<p>congregacion for ever. Amen. Seke nowe the faveour off men, or off God? more fervently mayntayned the tradicions vnto Peter glorified god in me*</p>	<p>Ch. 1. - A. — - B. — - D. —</p>	<p>congregacions for ever and ever. Amen.* Preache I mannes doctrine or Godes? more fervent mayntener of the tradicions to se Peter* glorified God on my behalffe</p>
<p>I went agayne I went by which are and as sone as James, Cephas, and Jhon, which semed to be pillares, perceaved the grace thatt was geven vnto me, they gave to me and Barnabas their hondes* to folowe the Jewes? and we have because that noo flesshe shalbe iustified by the dedes of the lawe then is Christ deed in vayne*</p>	<p>Ch. 2. - A. — — - B. — — — - D. — — —</p>	<p>I went vp agayne* I went vp by* which were* and therfore when they per- ceaved the grace that was geven vnto me, then James, Cephas and John, which semed to be pilers, gave to me and Barnabas the ryght hondes to live as do the Jewes?*. And therfore we have because that by y<sup>e</sup> dedes of y<sup>e</sup> lawe no flesshe shalbe iustified then Christ dyed in vayne.</p>
<p>ye have suffred in vayne : yf it be so that ye have suffered in vayne are the children The scripture and shewed thy seedes confermed of god vnto which seede the promes Yff there had bene* put Christ on you nether greke for all are one</p>	<p>Ch. 3. - A. — - B. — - C. — — — - D. — — —</p>	<p>there ye have suffred in vayne, if y<sup>e</sup> be vayne. the same are the chyldren For the scripture and therfore shewed the seedes confermed afore of God* to which y<sup>e</sup> promes How be it yf ther had bene put on Christ* nether gentyle but ye are all one*</p>

FIRST EDITION, 1526.

GALATIANS.

REVISED IN 1534.

	Ch. 4.	
shulde receave	- A.	myght receave*
the dayes	- B.	dayes*
I feare off you	—	I am in feare of you
not hurte me	—	not hurte me at all
Ye knowe wele howe that	—	ye knowe, how*
digged out youre awne eyes	—	plucked out youre awne eyes*
Am I so greatly become	—	Am I therfore become
Caste a waye	- D.	put awaye
	Ch. 5.	
We lokefor and hope to be ius-	- A.	We loke for and hope in the
tified by the sprete which		sprite, to be iustified thorow
commeth of fayth		fayth
in god	- B.	in the Lorde*
I then suffre	—	I then yet suffre
sondred	—	seperated
lawynge	- C.	variaunce*
parte takynges	- D.	sectes
shall not be the inheritours	—	shall not inherite*
	Ch. 6.	
Yff a man seme*	—	If eny man seme
Let vs do good, and let vs not	—	Let vs not be wery of well
faynte.		doynge.*